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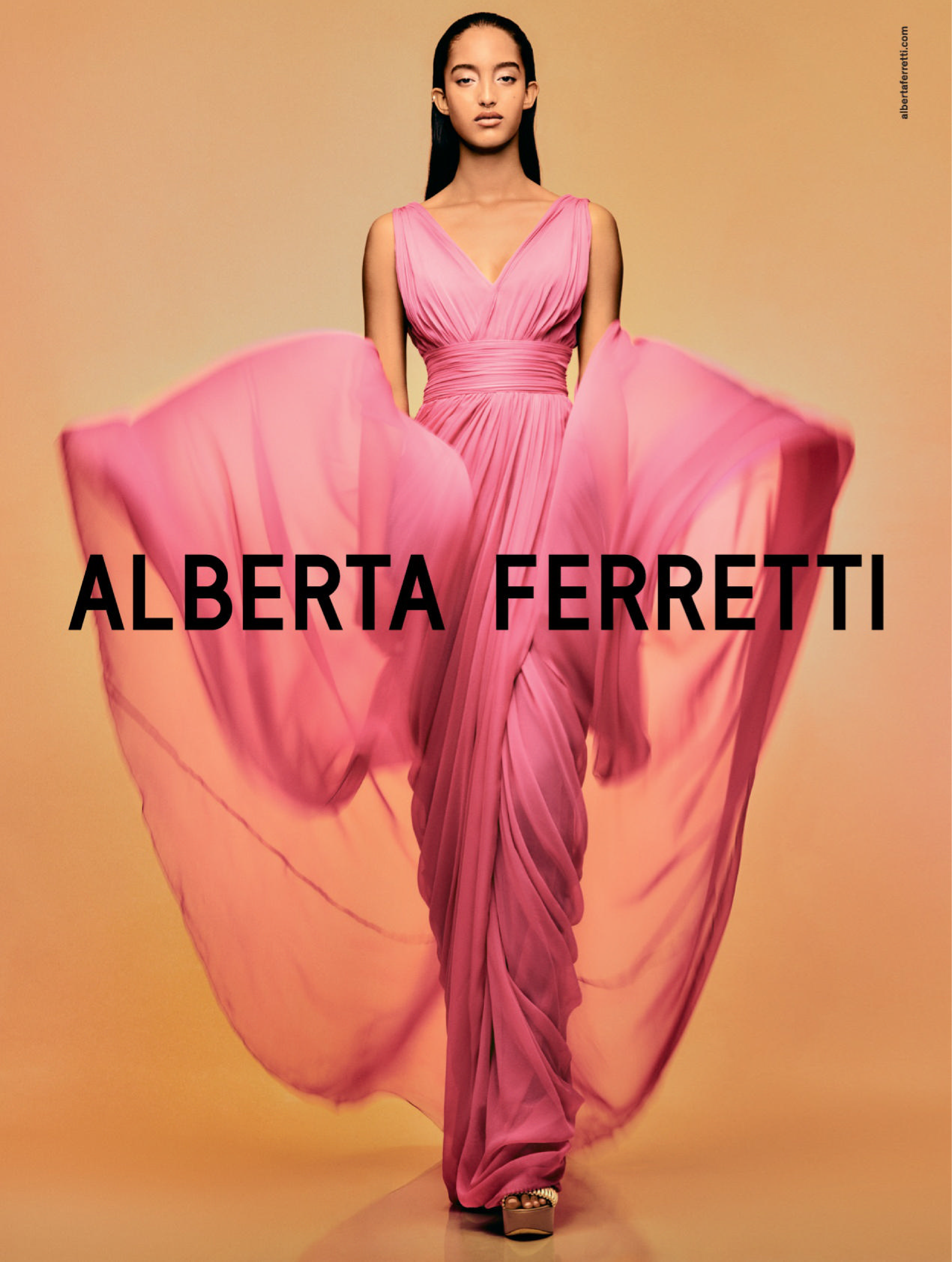
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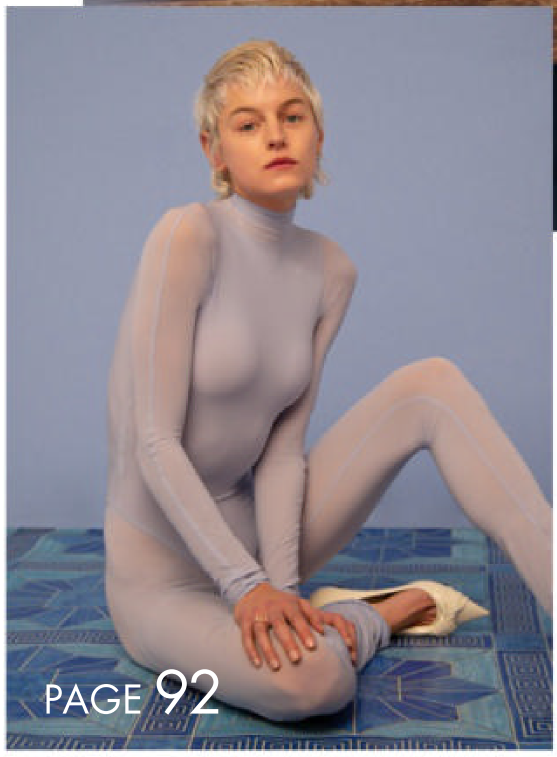

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ON THE COVER

EMMA CORRIN
BODYSUIT AND TROUSERS BOTH ALAÏA. SHOES, JIMMY CHOO. EARRINGS, CARTIER. PHOTOGRAPH BY RUTH OSSAI. STYLING BY BEN SCHOFIELD. HAIR BY DANIEL MARTIN. MAKE-UP BY GINA KANE AT CAREN, USING CHANEL SPRING/SUMMER 2023 AND NO 1 DE CHANEL. MANICURE BY SABRINA GAYLE AT ARCH THE AGENCY. SET DESIGN BY RUTH OSSAI STUDIOS. STYLIST'S ASSISTANTS: GAL KLEIN AND POPPY NORTON

PHOTOGRAPH: LIZ COLLINS

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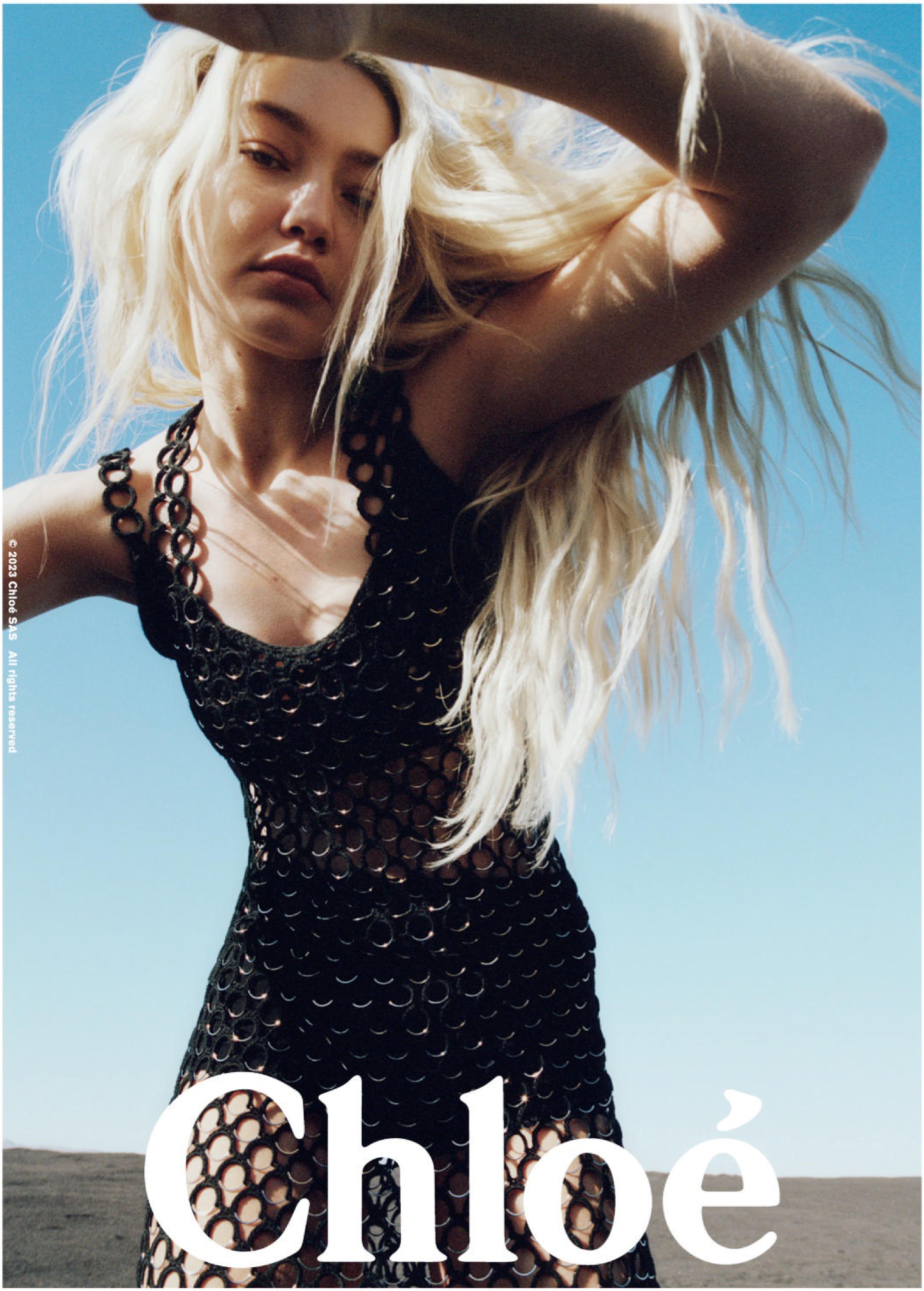

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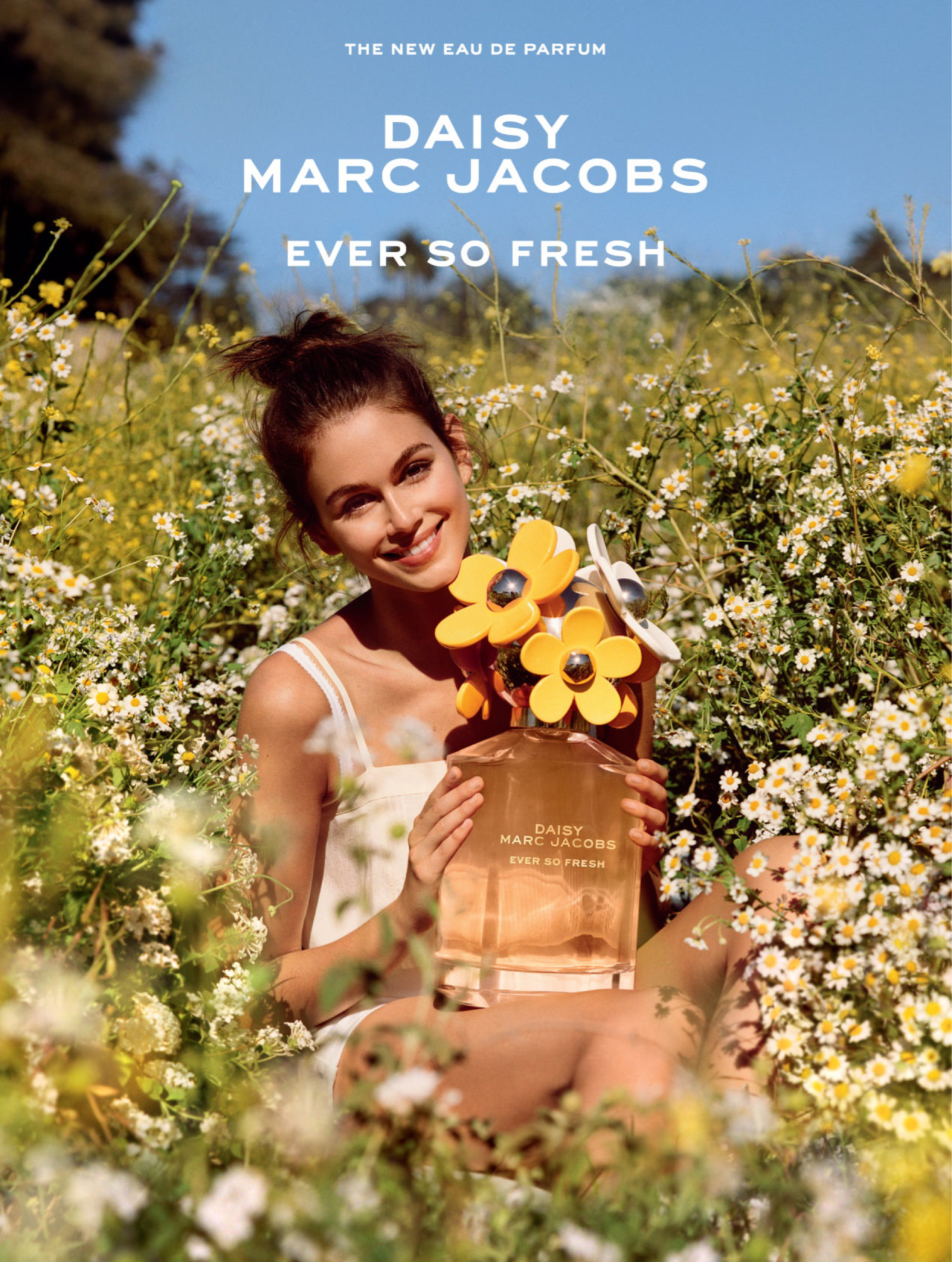
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editor's letter

RARE FLOWER
THE STANDOUT LOOKS OF SS23 STEAL THE SHOW IN OUR SHOOT ON P120

PHOTOGRAPHS: NATHANIEL GOLDBERG, EDD HORDER

WHAT IS THE LOOK OF THE 2020S? BEYOND THE FACT THAT I'm writing this editor's letter three days after the start of the New Year, or that this issue is hitting newsstands as a fresh season of runway shows kicks off, there is a palpable feeling in the air that one era is ending in fashion, and a new one beginning. The vibe shift that trend forecasters predicted last year seems to be settling into place. We've witnessed headline-making creative-director departures, with Alessandro Michele's exit from Gucci, Riccardo Tisci's move away from Burberry and Raf Simons' decision to shutter his beloved label. And we're also preparing for big designer debuts (stage right: Daniel Lee taking the helm at Burberry and Harris Reed at Nina Ricci.)

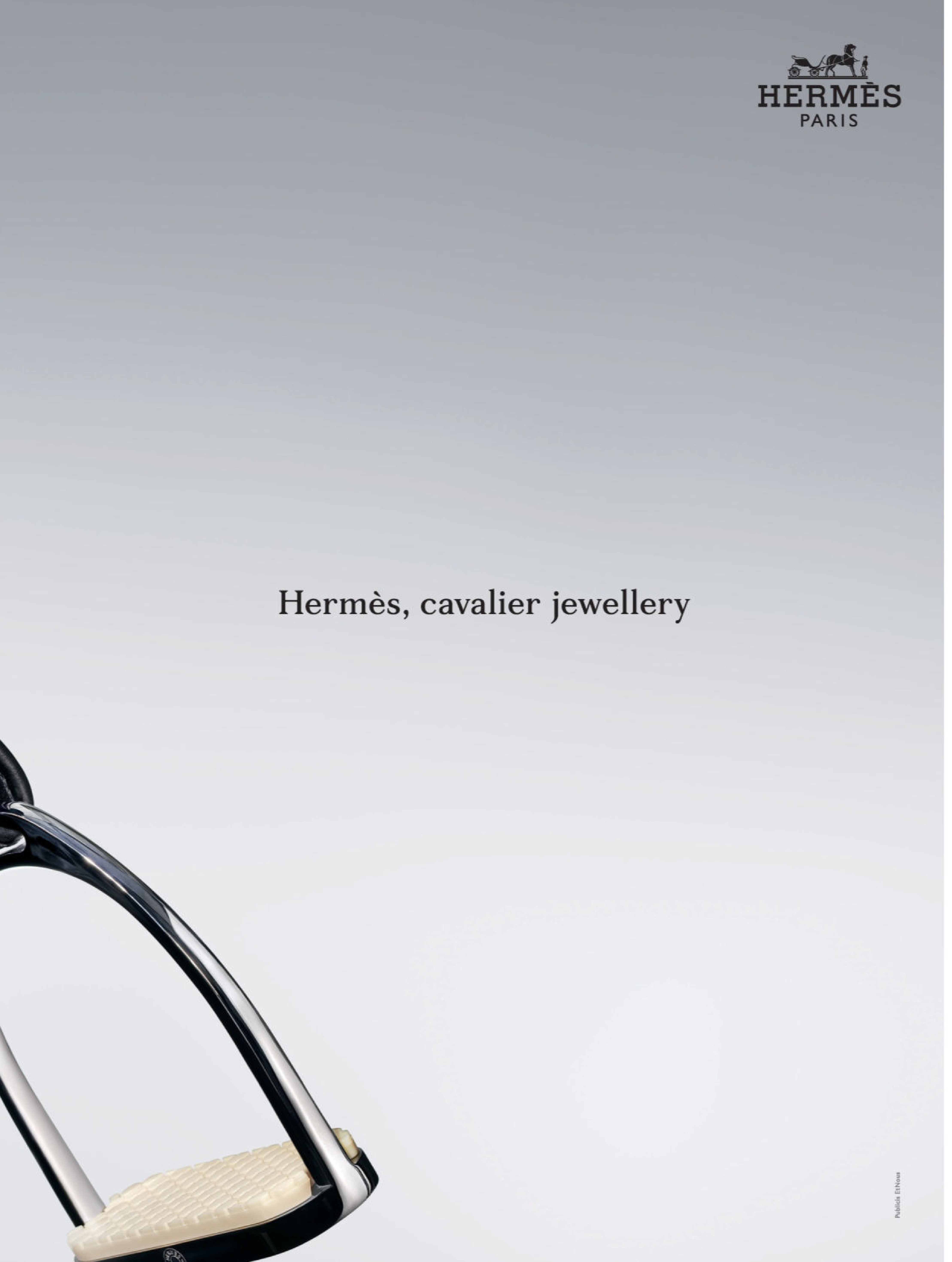
The clothes we wear are in a state of flux. How that looks depends on who you ask. A recent op-ed in *The Guardian* referred to the style of the moment as 'chaotic', 'messy', and 'falling apart' like the world around us. Meanwhile, *The Wall Street Journal* has described this period as one in which 'fashion got weird'. I'd counter that, and say the general vibe is one of rebellion, a refusal to be contained by a single overriding trend or colour story. Perhaps when we look back on this decade it won't be about a dominant hemline like the swingy mini-skirt of the Sixties or modest prairie dress of the 2010s. And maybe it won't be about an inescapable uniform like the Fifties-era New Look or Nineties minimalism. What if the look of the 2020s is an energy, an attitude, more than anything else?

The spirit of rebellion and how it's helping shape this unfolding decade runs throughout this special fashion issue. On p46, Jess Cartner-Morley analyses the surreal turn the catwalks have taken and what this will mean for our wardrobes. Meanwhile our cover star Emma Corrin joins a portfolio of rising upstarts from the worlds of television and film – intelligent, status quo-busting talents including digital cover stars Micheal Ward and Daryl McCormack – in trying on some of the season's most thrilling looks by our favourite fashion rebels ('Being Emma Corrin', p92, and 'Screen savers', p98).

And on p132, Rosamund Urwin explores the tidal wave of what a recent Gallup poll called female fury, as women from Iran to Ukraine to here in the UK take a stand for our collective rights, whether it be to decide what we do with our bodies, preserve our basic freedoms or increase access to affordable childcare. On our fashion pages, we celebrate the strong spirit of freedom and individualism running throughout the spring season ('Back to black', p108 and 'One of a kind', p120). There has never been a more fascinating time to get dressed.

Kenya

KENYA HUNT Editor-in-Chief



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MARCO ANTONIO

Chanel's make-up artist Marco may have 25 years of professional experience behind him, but his beauty memories go back further than that. 'When I was about six years old, I remember watching my mom glide on her lipstick and dab on a bit of blush. She wasn't a big make-up wearer, but I was fascinated by the texture of that cream blusher even then.' His signature style, as seen on our beauty shoot, incorporates elements of his Brazilian heritage: 'Always lots of bold colour.'

PAGE 46

JESS CARTNER-MORLEY

According to the associate editor (fashion) at *The Guardian*, 'Fashion has all the best storylines.' Her first runway show was Alexander McQueen's Voss in 2001, where, 'Kate Moss was wrapped in bandages and Erin O'Connor wore a dress made of razor clams.' More memorable moments include, 'being at a Jennifer Lopez wedding party at Donatella Versace's villa in Lake Como'. Jess writes about SS23's obsession with surrealism.

PAGE 108

CRYSTALLE COX

After studying broadcast journalism, Crystalle began her fashion journey with a four-week internship at ELLE's publisher, Hearst UK, back in 2018. Now she works across the cover and fashion shoots, compiles shopping pages for ELLE magazine, and works with major celebrities such as Zendaya and Priyanka Chopra Jonas under celebrity stylist Law Roach. 'No two shoots are ever the same,' she says of 'Back to black'.

PAGE 92

RUTH OSSAI

Raised between Nigeria and West Yorkshire, Ossai's pictures are influenced by traditional Nigerian studio photography using striking backdrops and floor mats. For the cover portfolio, Ossai shot a group of award-season stars at the threshold of their next big breakthrough. Of what has inspired her work for 2023, she says: 'My friends, my family and iconography from Noughties Nollywood films.'

DARYL McCORMACK WEARS JACKET, £2,450, AND SHIRT, £475, BOTH GUCCI. EARRING (SOLD AS PAIR), £5,800, AND WATCH, £4,050, BOTH CARTIER. PHOTOGRAPHS: RUTH OSSAI, LULU MCARDLE, DAVID NEWBY

ALVA CLAIRE for MARINA RINALDI

MARINA RINALDI

Imagine this

Balloon shoes, pool-inflatable dresses and nipple buttons. A reflection of our offbeat reality, surrealism is back on the catwalk – the more extraordinary, the better

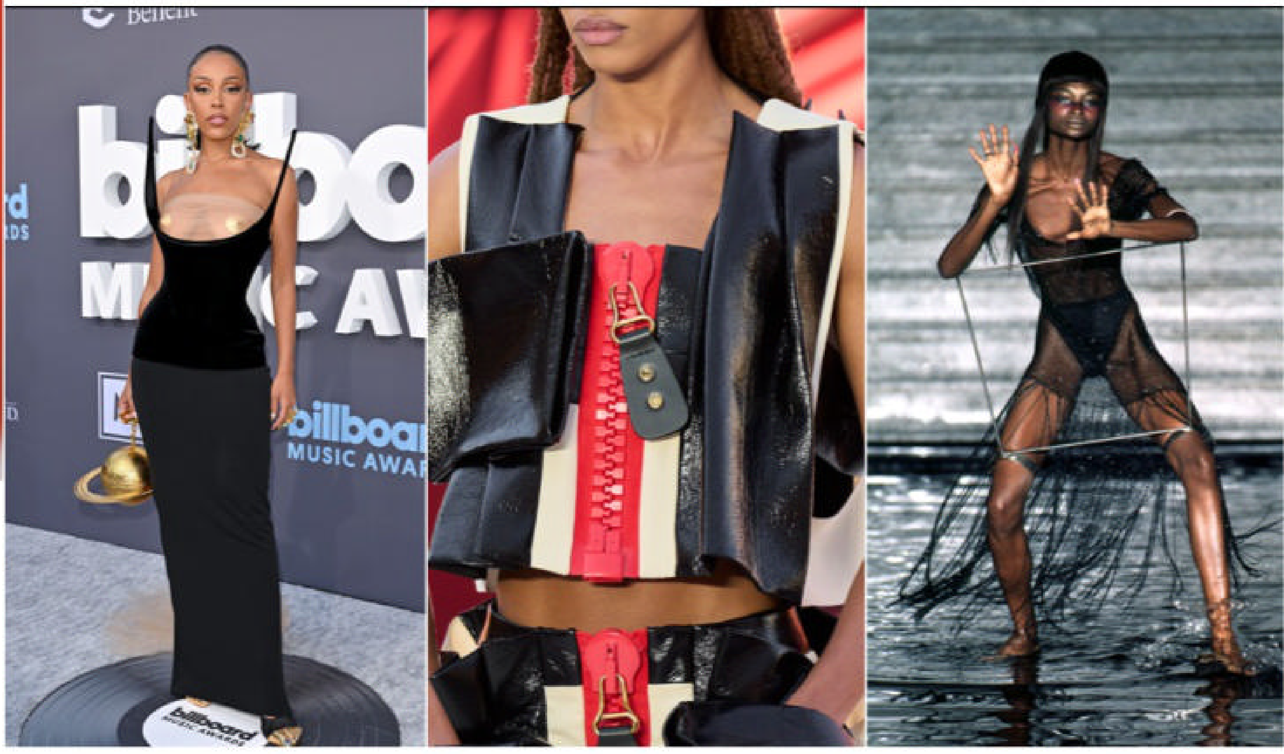
WORDS BY JESS CARTNER-MORLEY

SOMETHING STRANGE IS HAPPENING IN FASHION. STEP INSIDE Schiaparelli in Paris on the Place Vendôme and you will find an exquisitely tailored, black double-breasted blazer that boasts, on closer inspection, a lovingly sculpted pair of gold nipples for a top row of buttons. Note, also, the chic box-frame handbag with a snap closure in the shape of a disembodied nose. You will probably have spotted that the shoe of the season is Loewe's balloon pump, so densely encrusted with deflated balloons that they could be ruffles or a shower of fallen petals. And you might remember that, at Moschino's latest show, Jeremy Scott took the catwalk's oldest adage – that clothes reflect the times we live in – and fashioned it into a visual pun. 'Everyone's talking about inflation,' he said in Milan that night. 'The cost of everything's going up: housing, food, life. So I took inflation into the collection.' Cue a menagerie of pool inflatables – a turtle, a tiger, a flamingo – stacked, totem-pole style, over a cocktail dress.

This is not mere whimsy, or common-or-garden oddness. It is nothing less than the second coming of surrealism. 'This summer the roses are blue; the wood is of glass,' wrote André Breton in 1924's *Manifesto of Surrealism*. Breton would have been in his element at the Loewe show, where a giant red fibreglass anthurium flower towered over the catwalk. (The surrealists, who loved their Freudianisms, would have appreciated the anthurium, that most phallic of blooms.) The brand where Elsa Schiaparelli created some of the greatest artefacts of surrealism in collaboration with Salvador Dalí – the shoe worn as a hat, the iconic lobster dress – was officially relaunched back in 2014, but it was only when the American designer Daniel Roseberry took the helm five years later, and zoomed in on disembodied body parts rendered in gold as a surreal house signature, that the Schiaparelli name stepped out of the history books and onto the red carpet, worn by everyone from Beyoncé and Michelle Obama to Julia Fox and our cover star Emma Corrin.

With its disembodied ears (Schiaparelli), keyboard buttons used as sequins (JW Anderson) and monster-sized zip pulls (Louis Vuitton), surrealism is not exactly what you might call an obvious choice in an industry where glamour, elegance and sex appeal are the preferred currencies. And yet it is one of the breakout trends of the season, catching our imagination by holding up a hall of mirrors to our lives. Surrealism, which delights in mashing up everyday reality with our dreams and unconscious desires, feels entirely contemporary in our fake-news, post-truth, social-media-inflamed universe. André Breton wrote, 'I believe in the future resolution of these two states, dream and reality, which are seemingly so contradictory, into a kind of absolute reality, a surreality.' Is it just me, or does that sound uncannily like a description of Instagram and the way social media has rewired our brains? In a cartoonish political culture where news headlines frequently have a you-couldn't-make-it-up ring to them, surrealism is an aesthetic reflection of the insanity of our reality.

Surrealism was born in opposition to the 'rationalism' that some artists and thinkers believed had guided Europe into World War I. Surrealists wanted to give the thoughts and ideas of the subconscious, irrational mind their place in culture alongside logic and tradition. It was a visual movement, drawing on the fragmented pictures of dreams and on unconventional depictions of the human body, and soon forged a deep connection with fashion. Elsa Schiaparelli was



WEIRD SCIENCE
FROM LEFT: LOEWE SS23; MOSCHINO SS23; DOJA CAT ATTENDING THE BILLBOARD AWARDS IN SCHIAPARELLI; LOUIS VUITTON SS23; A LOOK FROM ALEXANDER McQUEEN'S SS97 COLLECTION

a successful fashion designer and Salvador Dalí a young artist when they met in 1930s Paris. 'Schiap' gave Dalí access to wealthy benefactors; Dalí gave Schiaparelli an artistic credibility and an edge in her great rivalry with Coco Chanel. Together, Dalí and Schiap became a powerful force in the avant-garde culture of that decade.

In the intervening century, surrealism never entirely disappeared from fashion. Alexander McQueen's SS97 collection, La Poupée, was inspired by the distorted dolls in the photographs of surrealist artist Hans Bellmer. The 2010s craze for fur-lined shoes – shaggy sliders at Phoebe Philo's Céline in 2013, furry loafers at Gucci two years later – owed something to Méret Oppenheim's iconic *Luncheon in Fur* artwork of 1936, which depicted a teacup lined in gazelle pelt. But the mainstream fashion industry wasn't always keen. When Opening Ceremony collaborated with Birkenstock in 2014 on a range of shoes printed with images from René Magritte's unsettling paintings, a headline in the *Huffington Post* asked, 'Are these the ugliest shoes of all time?'

It was in 2016 that the pendulum began to swing back toward surrealism. That year, the American dictionary Merriam-Webster named 'surreal' as its Word of the Year. Virgil Abloh, who joined Louis Vuitton as artistic director of menswear in 2018, sent out invitations for a menswear show in the form of clock that ran anti-clockwise; the show space and the clothes were covered in idealised white clouds scudding across a blue sky in homage to Magritte.

That show was in January 2020. And, well, we all know what happened next. Within a few months, reality entered an era of unprecedented strangeness with a global pandemic that put an emergency brake on life as we knew it. When the world started turning again, many in fashion predicted a return to the Roaring Twenties: sequins and dancing shoes, short dresses and late nights. As it turned out, we did get a return to the vibe of that decade – but in an unexpected form. It was the surrealist artists of that time, rather than the flapper girls, who fashion designers channelled to reflect the 'wait, what on earth just happened?' mood of the times.

Jonathan Anderson spent his first eight years at Loewe leaning into an artisanal luxe vision of linen-and-raffia chic until, in 2021, he performed a handbrake turn into high-gloss surrealist style and turbocharged Loewe from an insidery favourite to a fashion powerhouse. In the SS22 show, sandals featured high heels sculpted in the form of broken eggshells, of lipsticks, of a single rose. With each show since, Anderson has pushed further into surrealism. Elsewhere, AW22 saw a cosy, squishy puffer coat incongruously printed to resemble Dresden china at Dries Van Noten; at Moschino, models appeared dressed as grandfather clocks, as upholstered armchairs and as lacquered screens. By the time London Fashion Week rolled around in September last year, a dress made to look like a plastic bag containing a goldfish – as seen at JW Anderson's own-label show, held in a Soho video-gaming arcade – had become the sort of thing front-row regulars have learnt to take in their stride.

And it's not just our wardrobes that have taken a strange turn. The food scene has fallen hard for star chef Laila Gohar's surreal canapés. Butter pats in the shape of fingers, chairs made from sponge cake and edible ant sculptures crafted from maraschino cherries have made her the hottest chef and food designer in New York, beloved by the art and fashion worlds. Surrealism's revival can be seen on our mantelpieces – the bottoms and breasts of those Anissa Kermiche vases that are now a modern must-have would have tickled Magritte and Dalí – and on our walls. The vogue for surrealist art is spelled out in the prices being fetched at auction. In March last year, René Magritte's painting *L'Empire des lumières* – a paradoxical scene of a lamp-lit, nocturnal house beneath a blue and sunny sky – sold for £59.4 million, tripling the previous record price for the artist. Two months later, Man Ray's surrealist portrait *Le Violon d'Ingres* sold for £10 million, the highest price ever paid for a single photograph.

Daniel Roseberry has said that in his first year at Schiaparelli, spent in the feverish uncertainty of the early days of the pandemic, he sometimes felt like he was designing for the end of the world. Thankfully, the world came back to life – and so did fashion. Yet, what we call the 'new normal' is anything but. Weird is the new wonderful. ☐

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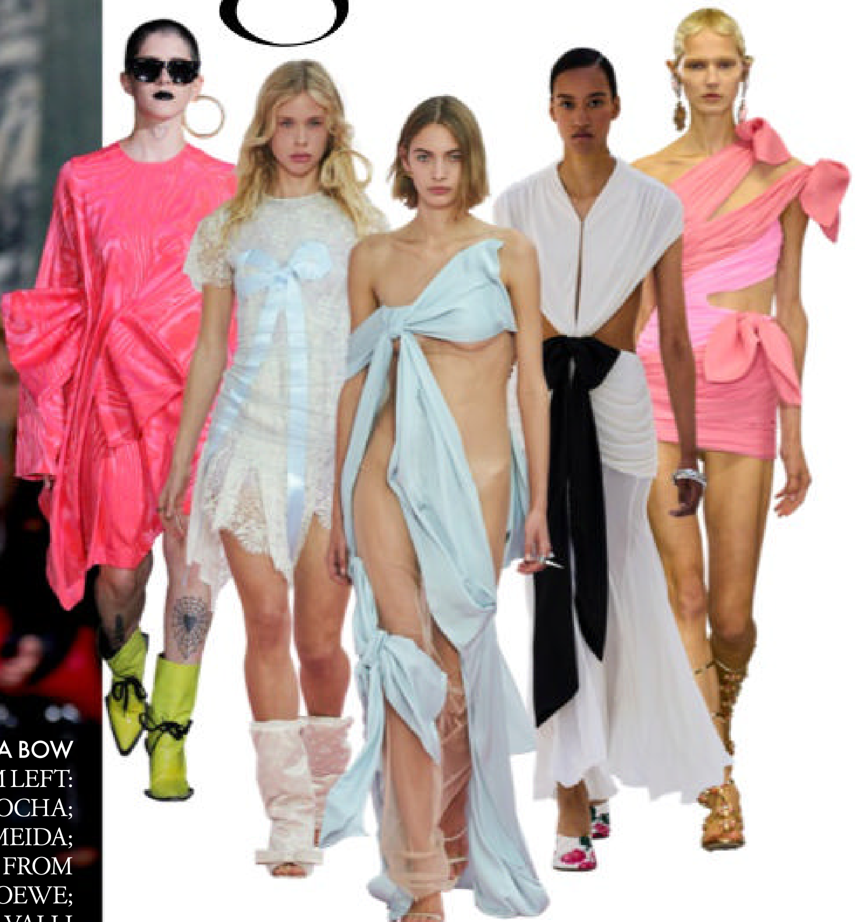


TAKE A BOW
FROM LEFT:
SIMONE ROCHA;
MARQUES'ALMEIDA;
TWO LOOKS FROM
ACNE; LOEWE;
GIAMBATTISTA VALLI

Subversive bows and ribbons are big for SS23, as seen at Simone Rocha, Acne Studios and Moschino. The look is one of skewed romanticism, rather than Disney princess. Wear them shoulder to toe, or wrapped across the torso.

visit: Boys Hall

Embrace all things cosy at this retreat in Ashford, Kent: sink into an armchair, plunge into a roll-top tub and get lost in the wild herb garden. Set amid three acres of land (and less than an hour from London's St Pancras) with 10 ensuite bedrooms, a restaurant and a timber-clad pub, the family owned, Grade II-listed hotel opens this month for the weekend break we all need.

watch: Succession returns

Finally, the highly anticipated fourth season of Succession has arrived. Expect 10 episodes packed to the brim with power struggles and family drama as the sale of patriarch Logan Roy's media conglomerate edges ever closer. Angst, scheming and betrayal – it's a guaranteed binge.

WORDS: NATALIE ZANNIKOS, EVE WALKER AND LENA DE CASPARIS. PHOTOGRAPHS: IMAXTREE, HBO, MARK ANTHONY FOX

agenda

go see: LIZZO

The singer-rapper-flautist extraordinaire is touring the UK in support of her latest album, 'Special'. It's about damn time – we've had it on repeat since July. Catch her and special guest Joy Crookes from 8 to 15 March and dance the night away.

watch: Fashion week debuts

As runway season arrives, we welcome the new troop taking the helm of the most important runways, with Bottega Veneta wunderkind Daniel Lee (above) making his entrance at Burberry and Harris Reed stepping into the fantastical world of Nina Ricci. But the big question remains: who will take over from Alessandro Michele at Gucci? Stay tuned…

go see: Bigger & Closer

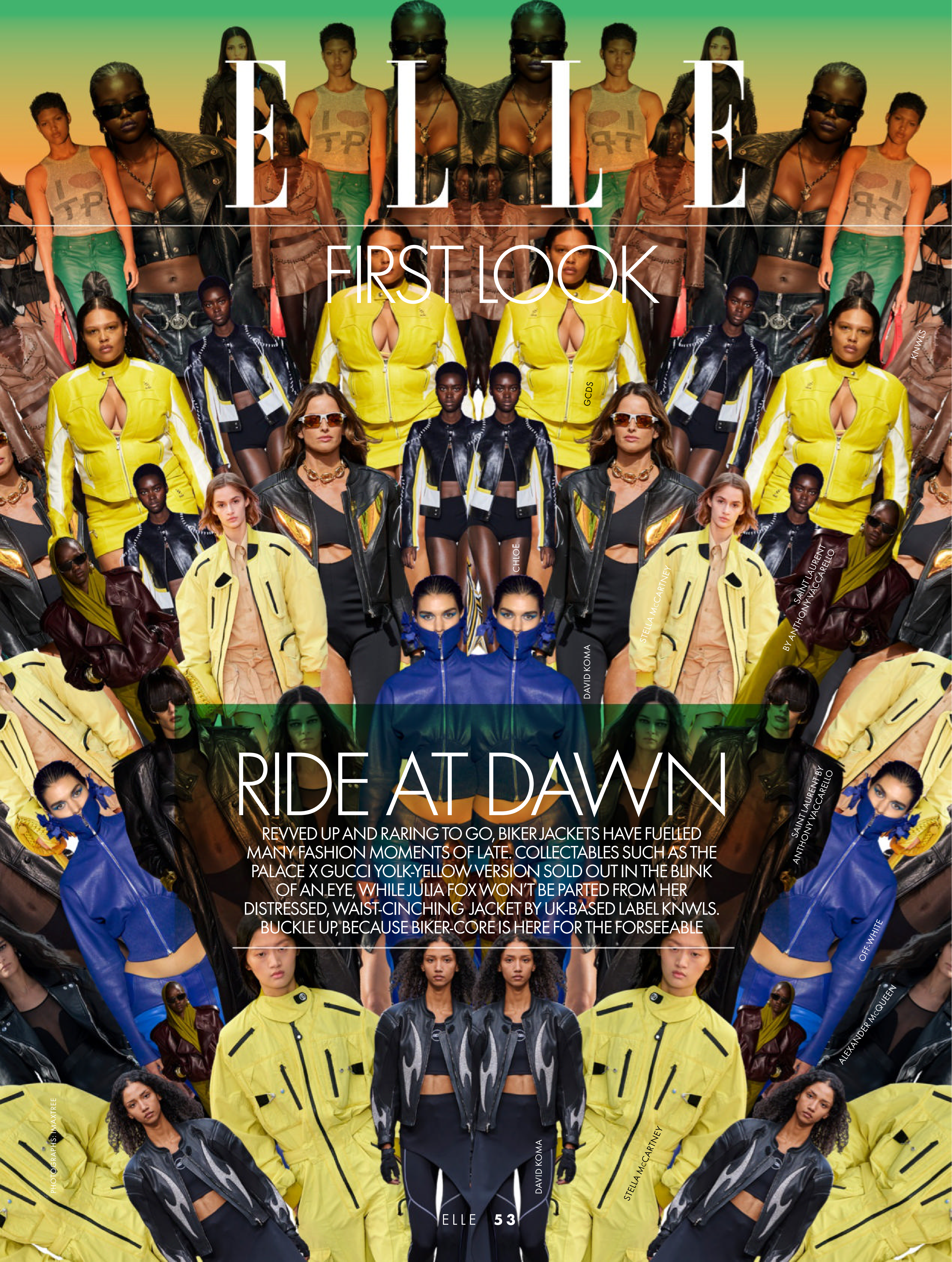
Lightroom presents the first of an impressive line-up of original shows in its new four-storey space in London's Kings Cross. Join the artist David Hockney on an intimate journey through his life's work, aided by the latest technology. The immersive exhibition took three years to bring together and features animation, bespoke interviews, large-scale projections and a commissioned score by Nico Muhly. You'll leave looking at the world as intensely as the man himself does.

PHOTOGRAPHS: AB+DM, DAVID HOCKNEY, COURTESY OF BURBERRY

ISABEL
MARANT

MARCCAIN
MARC-CAIN.COM

FIRST LOOK


GCDS
KNWLS
CHLOE
DAVID KOMA
STELLA McCARTNEY
SAINT LAURENT BY ANTHONY VACCARELLO
SAINT LAURENT BY ANTHONY VACCARELLO
OFF-WHITE
ALEXANDER McQUEEN
DAVID KOMA
STELLA McCARTNEY

RIDE AT DAWN

REVVED UP AND RARING TO GO, BIKER JACKETS HAVE FUELLED MANY FASHION MOMENTS OF LATE. COLLECTABLES SUCH AS THE PALACE X GUCCI YOLK-YELLOW VERSION SOLD OUT IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE, WHILE JULIA FOX WON'T BE PARTED FROM HER DISTRESSED, WAIST-CINCHING JACKET BY UK-BASED LABEL KNWLS. BUCKLE UP, BECAUSE BIKER-CORE IS HERE FOR THE FORSEEABLE

PHOTOGRAPHS: IMAXTREE

Introducing: Stefan Cooke

The rise and rise of this British-based label shows no signs of slowing. We meet the designers who refuse to sit still

WORDS BY ENI SUBAIR

WHEN KENDRICK LAMAR BROUGHT HIS 'THE BIG STEPPERS' TOUR to London last year, it was a delicate silk scarf from the Stefan Cooke SS23 collection that he wore onstage at the O2. Just weeks prior to that, Emma Corrin stepped out in a whimsical, vintage T-shirt emblazoned with the words 'foam party,' from the personal wardrobe of the label's designers.

Stefan Cooke and partner Jake Burt's signature slashed, lattice-work knitwear and innovative spin on everyday clothing have had a cult following for years. Now, with an expanding creative vision that notably includes the launch of womenswear, the A-listers are swarming. 'I want at least 50% [of our clothing] to be womenswear,' explains Burt. 'It feels like a natural progression,' Cooke says, before adding that Burt studied womenswear in school. 'For women, you can go full-on, and totally cover something with ribbons as we are doing. I think there's something beautiful about that.'

The two, who have been in a relationship for 11 years, met while they were both students. Burt, from Somerset, initially studied fine art at Somerset College of Arts and Technology before relocating to do an MA course in womenswear; while Cooke, who was raised in Crawley, describes a more tumultuous journey in which he was kicked out of several colleges before eventually landing at Central Saint Martins to study fashion print. 'We felt a real connection and we were able to discuss fashion with ease and in a particular way that we both understood,' Cooke says with a grin. Within months of the meeting, their bond was solidified. 'I think there are only a few people in your life that you can really feel comfortable with and discuss fashion unabashedly with – it felt amazing,' Cooke says.

Jake and Stefan embarked on a design partnership, resulting in a successful show in January 2018. 'Jake and I discussed how it could work and we felt it would be easier for us to do this together,' explains Cooke. 'Our aesthetics have developed both personally and as a pair throughout our entire time in education; working on Stefan Cooke is a vessel to show both our creative outputs.'

Critical acclaim soon followed when they were nominated for an LVMH prize in 2019. Now, five years into the lifespan of their business, the pair are passionate about the evolution of the label. 'Our philosophy is difficult to pin down. I used to feel a bit embarrassed saying that,' Burt says. 'But I don't anymore.'

PHOTOGRAPHS: SAMMY BAXTER, LAURA JANE COULSON, COURTESY OF HARRY LAMBERT, HAYDON PERRIOR/@HAYDONPERRIOR

TAKE A BOW
FROM LEFT: PIECES FROM THE SS23 COLLECTION; JAKE BURT AND STEFAN COOKE; TWO LOOKS FROM THE SS23 SHOW; EMMA CORRIN IN A VINTAGE T-SHIRT UPCYCLED BY THE LABEL'S DESIGNERS

BOOKS

SPRING READS

DISCOVER THE BEST NEW RELEASES OF THE SEASON, FROM A CRUISE-SHIP MURDER MYSTERY TO A LAUGH-OUT-LOUD ANTI-ROMANCE

WORDS BY EVE WALKER

THE MYSTERY:
THE ANNIVERSARY
by Stephanie Bishop

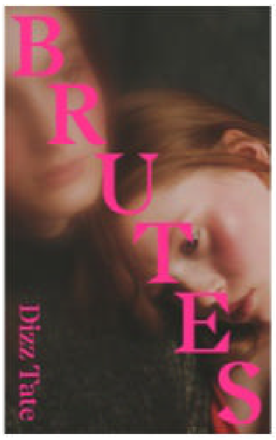
Novelist JB Blackwood has always lived in the shadow of her film-director husband Patrick, but as she gets close to winning a huge literary prize, their roles switch. The pair go on a dream cruise to celebrate their anniversary, but it turns into a nightmare… For fans of: *Mad Honey* by Jodi Picoult.

The Anniversary
STEPHANIE BISHOP

HANNA JAMESON
ARE YOU HAPPY NOW

THE DYSTOPIAN HIT:
ARE YOU HAPPY NOW
by Hanna Jameson

Four friends are waiting to get their lives on track – until they witness the world as they know it ending. At a wedding, they watch as one of the guests sits down and is unable to get up again. Soon the bizarre phenomenon is spreading across the world. Is it a choice or a disease? A story of hope in times of crisis. For fans of: *Station Eleven* by Emily St John Mandel.



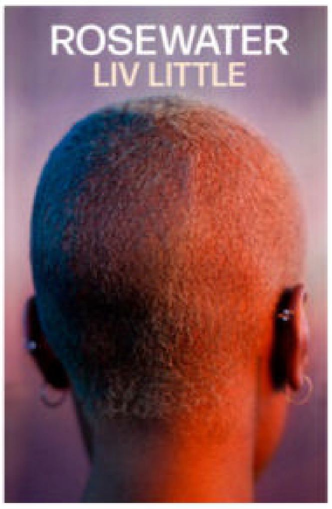
THE SWELTERING SUSPENSE:
BRUTES *by Dizz Tate*

In the Florida town of Falls Landing is a tight-knit group of teenage girls, an alligator-infested lake and a dark secret. When one girl goes missing, her friends become consumed by the mystery. A haunting debut about the corruption of innocence. For fans of: *The Virgin Suicides* by Jeffrey Eugenides.

THE DIVORCE-COM:
REALLY GOOD, ACTUALLY
by Monica Heisey

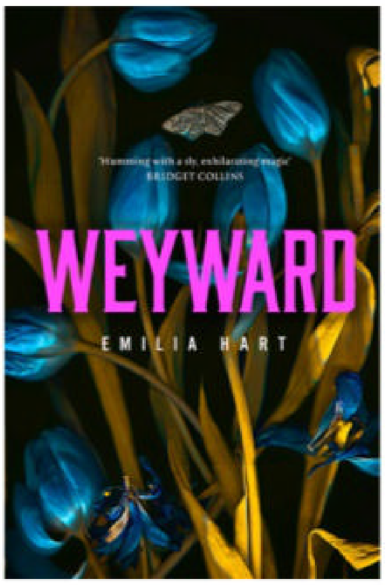
Despite the breakdown of her marriage, Maggie's life is really good, actually, and she is determined to make a success of her first year as a divorcée. A funny and tender representation of friendship, love and loneliness. For fans of: *Everything I Know About Love* by Dolly Alderton.

really good, actually
MONICA HEISEY



THE MODERN ROMANCE:
ROSEWATER *by Liv Little*

Set in south London, this queer love story with subtle social commentary follows Elsie, a poet working at a gay bar but still falling behind on rent. Rejected by her family and struggling to make ends meet, Elsie is evicted and things get confusing when she's forced to move in with a childhood friend. For fans of: *The Bricks that Built the Houses* by Kae Tempest.

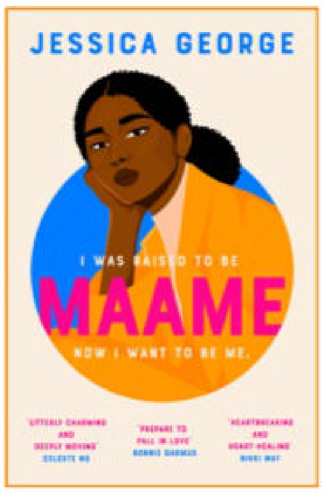


THE FAMILY SAGA:
WEYWARD *by Emilia Hart*

This spellbinding book follows three generations of women striving for empowerment. Kate escapes her abusive relationship to a cottage in Cumbria, which she inherited from her great-aunt Violet. While there, she discovers her ancestor Altha was tried as a witch in 1619. Their stories may be centuries apart, but they are woven together seamlessly. For fans of: *The Island of Missing Trees* by Elif Shafak.

THE INSPIRING DEBUT:
MAAME *by Jessica George*

Maddie's nickname is 'Maame'; she is a carer to her father, who has Parkinson's disease, while her mother ricochets between Ghana and London. Stuck in a dead-end job, she yearns for better – and to be away from her family. This coming-of-age story is witty, poignant and inspiring. For fans of: *How to Kill Your Family* by Bella Mackie.



MUSIC

In conversation: Flo

The girl group's debut single 'Cardbord Box' catapulted them to ones-to-watch status last year. With an even busier 2023 ahead, they're poised for a global takeover

WORDS BY ENI SUBAIR

GIRL POWER
OPPOSITE: FLO, AKA (FROM LEFT) JORJA DOUGLAS, STELLA QUARESMA AND RENÉE DOWNER. ABOVE: FLO PERFORMING AT *JIMMY KIMMEL LIVE!* LAST OCTOBER. RIGHT: THE GROUP ATTENDING LAST YEAR'S MOBO AWARDS

WHEN BRITISH R&B GROUP FLO WERE told they'd won the 2023 Brits Rising Star Award in December – the first non-solo act to do so since the award was created 15 years ago – their manager brought some balloons and Krispy Kreme doughnuts to the studio, and they live-streamed the moment for fans on TikTok.

It's natural that the trio – Renée Downer, Stella Quaresma and Jorja Douglas – would want to share the news online. After all, it was the internet that powered the success of their debut single, 'Cardboard Box', back in March last year. Produced by MNEK (who has spawned hits for Dua Lipa, Beyoncé and Little Mix), the track dripped with Noughties nostalgia and quickly stormed up the streaming charts, surpassing more than 40 million global streams and over a billion views on TikTok. So well-received was the single Stateside that it led to their debut US performance on Jimmy Kimmel back in October, which they described as a daunting but fun experience.

Fans praised the group for filling the girl-band-shaped hole left in the music sphere by Sugababes, Little Mix or even (whisper it) Destiny's Child. And comparisons naturally mounted, with hit singles 'Summertime' and 'Immature', garnering a slew of A-list followers, from SZA to Missy Elliott and even Kelly Rowland (who the band met while recording in LA). 'It's a full-circle moment; all the people that continue to show us love have inspired us at one point or another,' says Quaresma. As for the comparisons to female R&B groups that have come before, 21-year-old Douglas adds: 'It's flattering and amazing. We're at the beginning of our journey, and we want to follow the path our predecessors set up by adding something new.'

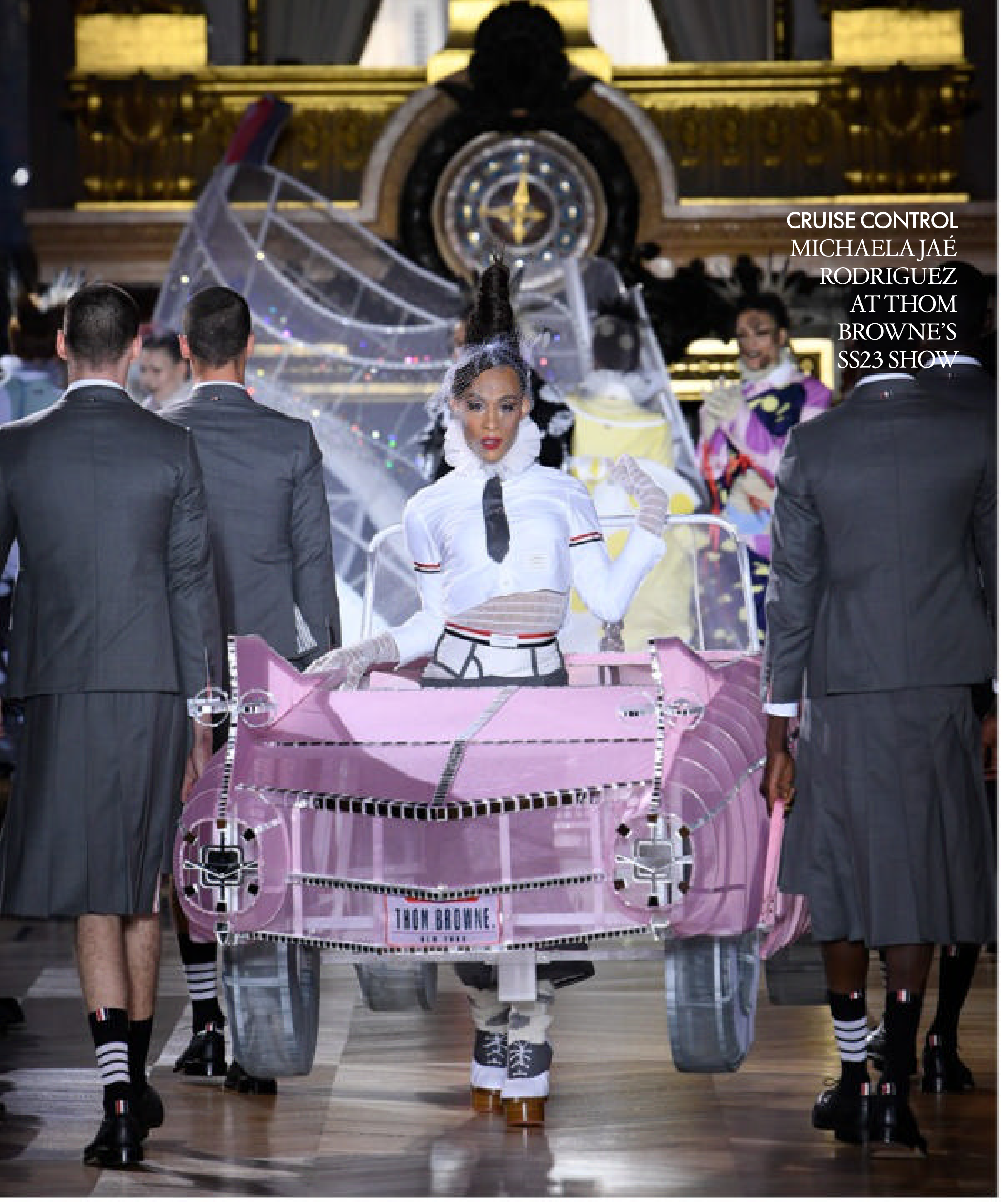
Those are big shoes to fill for the three London-based musicians who were raised by their single mothers on a diet of smooth Nineties love songs. The trio met when they were teenagers. Downer, raised in north London, and Quaresma, born in Kingston upon Thames, both studied at the prestigious Sylvia Young Theatre School in Marble Arch (which Adele and Amy Winehouse also attended) and later forged a relationship online with Douglas, who grew up in Hertfordshire. They're quick to explain the roles they all play within the band. 'I'm the pessimist, Renée's the optimist and Stella is the realist,' Douglas says. What unites them is a determination to write tracks that speak to women's agency and a chemistry that 'allows them to balance each other out', Douglas chimes in.

Next up, their single 'Losing You' is a standalone, soulful track in which they softly croon about cutting ties with a toxic partner. It's an ode to sisterhood and, musically, a departure from the bouncier sound the group have become known for. 'We discuss what we've all been experiencing and, usually, a theme will stick out,' says Downer, 20, about the songwriting process. 'There's pressure to create a catchy chorus when you're penning a faster song. Working on a slower-paced track felt a bit easier.'

Things are only set to get bigger for the band. They won BBC Radio 1's Sound of 2023, joining previous acts PinkPantheress, Jorja Smith and Celeste. They also sold out two headline gigs in London and Manchester within minutes – and bagged a Mobo nomination for Best Newcomer. 'It's good that we're all experiencing the same thing, so we're able to support and relate to one another,' says Quaresma, 21, of their ascent.

As for the album fans have been patiently awaiting, they confirm it's coming this year. Quaresma reels off a wish-list of collaborators: 'Megan Thee Stallion, Missy Elliott, Destin Conrad, Kehlani…' And they're just getting started. 'There's no rest for Flo,' she says. ☐

PHOTOGRAPHS: SHENELL KENNEDY, GETTY IMAGES



CRUISE CONTROL
MICHAELA JAÉ RODRIGUEZ AT THOM BROWNE'S SS23 SHOW

FASHION

THE TIKTOK EFFECT

CATWALKS AND FRONT ROWS HAVE BEEN TRANSFORMED BY THE VIDEO APP, AS DESIGNERS VIE TO CREATE THE ULTIMATE VIRAL MOMENT

WORDS BY TYLER McCALL

THOM BROWNE SWEARS HE DOESN'T PLAN ON GOING VIRAL when putting together his fashion shows; he doesn't even think about how they might play on the internet. Instead, he crafts his runway moments – which, really, are much more like pieces of theatre – to tell a story to those attending in real life. 'For me, it's more interesting that you get this more intimate experience in regard to what the collection is saying, or what I want to say through the collection,' Browne says.

Still, if you cast the Golden Globe-winning actress Michaela Jaé Rodriguez as a modern-day Cinderella and send her down the catwalk in a pink-tulle replica Cadillac to close the show, as Browne did for his spring 2023 collection, you'll attract more than a few eyeballs online. And on TikTok there are a lot of eyeballs to be had: the hashtag #fashionmonth alone had a staggering 228 million views in September 2022.

Fashion has always found its way onto social media, whether through archive-obsessed Tumblr accounts or the in-depth analyses on high-fashion Twitter – and, of course, Instagram, with its reputation for glossy images, has been the reigning platform of choice for many years. But, armed with a video-forward ethos, TikTok is poised to take over.

'Instagram almost feels like it's very controlled, like a traditional media outlet,' says Alyssa Mosley, a stylist and content creator who has found an audience on TikTok (@alyssamosley_). '[TikTok] is like the people's platform.'

Intentionally or otherwise, the SS23 season was packed with eye-catching moments perfect for the kind of bite-size videos that find success on TikTok. Courrèges created a giant sandpit for its catwalk, while Gucci's twin parade, with a cast of 68 pairs of identical twins revealed in a surprise finale twist, was a huge hit on the app. 'I definitely think the larger brands with the budgets have been trying to achieve those viral moments,' Mosley says. 'A lot of brands are really having fun with their production and set design to draw attention.'

But perhaps no show illustrates the power of going viral quite like Coperni's. In August 2022, the #coperni hashtag was doing admirably, clocking some 1.9 million views. Then, in September, the brand closed its SS23 show with a bang. Bella Hadid stepped onto a platform and was promptly sprayed down with a white material. With a few minor tweaks – a tug at the shoulders, a side slit to reveal some leg – she took her finale walk in a dress literally created on her body minutes before.

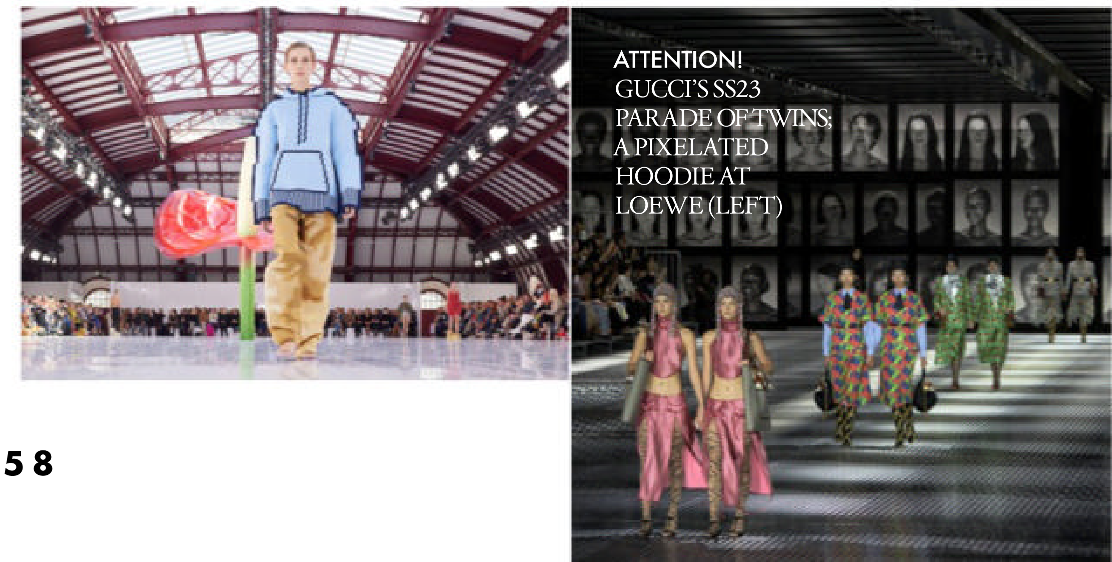
On social media, the proof is in the numbers: on TikTok, #coperni jumped to 7.3 million views in September, and then an astonishing 123 million views in October. (Hadid's name gained power, too, with #bellahadid going from 272 million views in August to 524 million views in October.)

Another quick route to viral success? Tapping into celebrity, of course. Famous people have been a mainstay in fashion for decades, but brands looking for headlines know that an A-list name goes a long way. Dolce & Gabbana partnered with Kim Kardashian for its SS23 collection, while Balmain and Versace put Cher and Paris Hilton respectively on their runways. For his production, Browne tapped actress Gwendoline Christie to play 'Charming' alongside Rodriguez's 'Cindy'.

And, because TikTok has minted so many celebrities, designers are now inviting popular creators to sit front row at their shows, whether it's Addison Rae at Givenchy or Wisdom Kaye at Ralph Lauren. 'TikTok stars who wouldn't traditionally be in the fashion space are being invited to a lot of different shows because they do draw attention,' Mosley says.

True fashion fanatics need not fret, though: the focus is still on the clothes. Loewe's *trompe l'oeil* pixelated pieces cut through, as did Maximilian Davis' red-tinged Ferragamo debut.

Going viral on TikTok enables designers to reach an entirely new audience. 'I love putting provocative ideas in front of people, opening them up to thinking differently about clothing or what's going on culturally,' Browne says. 'I like a reaction.' ☐



ATTENTION!
GUCCI'S SS23 PARADE OF TWINS; A PIXELATED HOODIE AT LOEWE (LEFT)

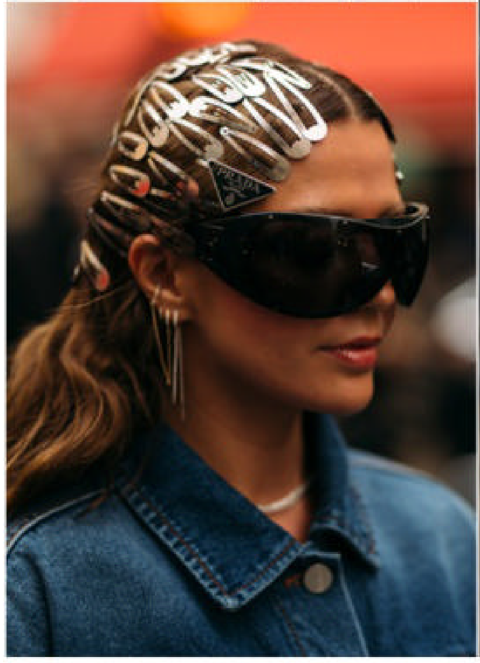
PHOTOGRAPHS: GETTY IMAGES, SHUTTERSTOCK

STREET STYLE

DOUBLE DARE

Say 'double denim' and immediately images of a matchy-matchy Britney Spears and Justin Timberlake circa 2001 spring to mind. While that look is appealing around Halloween (particularly for Y2K enthusiasts), there are more current ways to flaunt your dedication to a head-to-toe ensemble. Matthieu Blazy's denim-look leather trousers were catnip for fashion editors when he debuted them in his collection for Bottega Veneta. Fans of darker washes can take a foray into full denim by looking to brands such as Ganni and Rejina Pyo for directional suiting, shirts with dramatic collars and statement belts.

B*WITCHING
IT'S OFFICIAL: HEAD-TO-TOE DENIM HAS HAD A STUNNING REVAMP AND IS BACK LIKE NEVER BEFORE

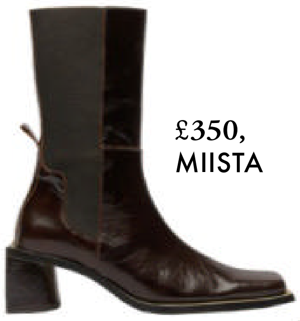


WORDS: ENI SUBAIR. PHOTOGRAPHS: IMAXTREE

THE BOOT DIRECTORY

FROM THIGH-GRAZERS TO TOWERING STACKED HEELS, THE FRESHEST BOOT SHAPES ARE PUSHING BOUNDARIES – AND HEEL HEIGHTS – TO NEW LEVELS. IT'S TIME TO TAKE YOUR PICK

NEW YORK STREET STYLE


£350, MIISTA

SQUARE-TOE GALORE

WHERE WE'VE SEEN IT: *Fidan Novruzova*

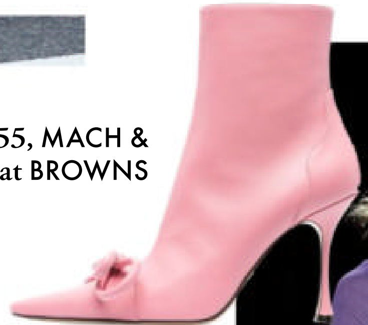
After the stellar year Fidan has had, it'd be remiss not to add these square-toe wonders to the top of your wish list. Thanks to Celeste and Bella Hadid sporting them in 2022, you'll be seeing even more of the young designer's pieces in 2023.

WHAT TO WEAR THEM WITH: Pair the boots with a mix of off-kilter pieces. Think leather jackets, patchwork skirts, cargo shorts or a keyhole dress.

CELESTE IN FIDAN NOVRUZOVA BOOTS

BELLA HADID IN FIDAN NOVRUZOVA BOOTS

YUHAN WANG


£955, MACH & MACH at BROWNS

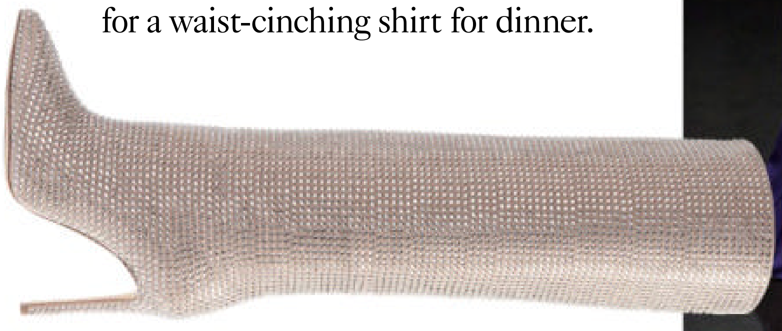
Y2K 2.0 (AGAIN)

WHERE WE'VE SEEN IT: *Sportmax*

At first glance, brightly coloured or sparkly boots may seem a little OTT, but maximalists will be embracing the eccentric style come summer. Follow in the footsteps of the models on the runways by committing to a one-colour look.

WHAT TO WEAR THEM WITH: Go full-on nostalgic and style them with an asymmetric floor-length skirt or baggy jeans and a halter, then swap for a waist-cinching shirt for dinner.

SPORTMAX

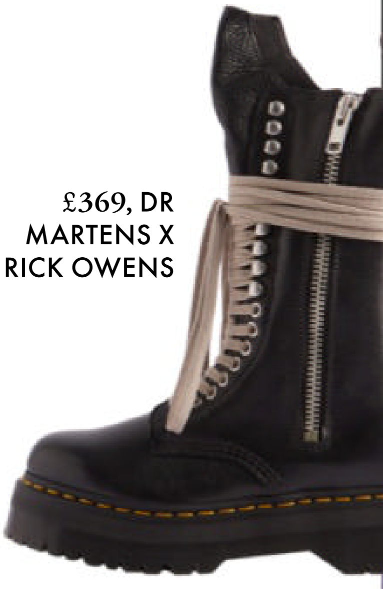

£1,135, PARIS TEXAS

STOMP THIS WAY

WHERE WE'VE SEEN IT: *Versace*

Donatella Versace found a clever way to keep fashion editors tuned in this season. Following the AW22 show, in which stacked heels were ubiquitous, SS23 models wore eye-popping vertiginous boots, the likes of which Doja Cat will no doubt be flaunting on her Instagram page in no time.

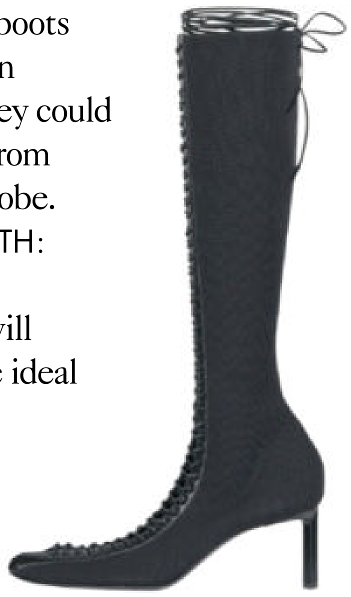
WHAT TO WEAR THEM WITH: These boots scream 'party', so follow orders. Team them with a lace dress and a *Matrix*-style leather coat, or stick to an all-black outfit featuring leather trousers and a popcorn top as seen on the catwalk.


£369, DR MARTENS X RICK OWENS

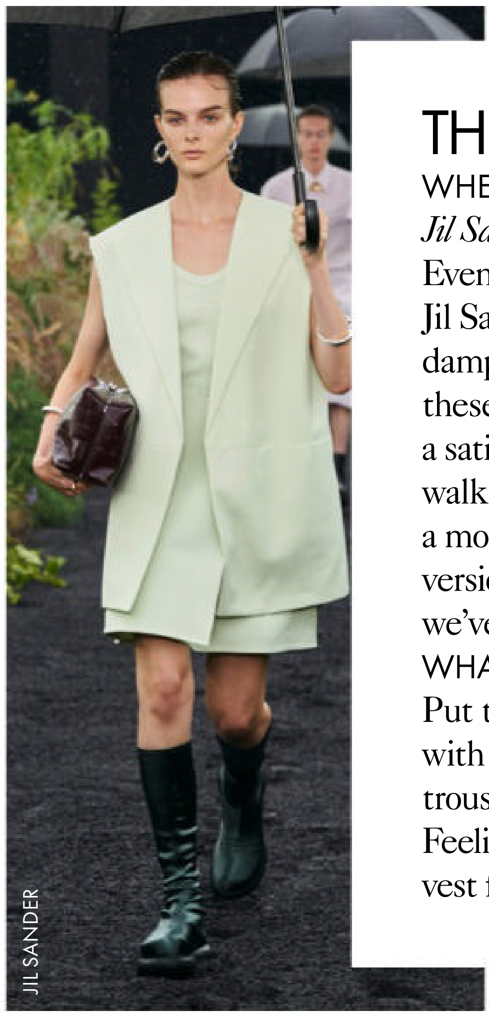
EMILY RATAJKOWSKI IN VERSACE

MODERN VAMP

WHERE WE'VE SEEN IT:
Yuhan Wang
These lace-up square-toe boots were a pivotal part of Yuhan Wang's SS23 collection; they could easily have been plucked from FKA Twigs' eclectic wardrobe.
WHAT TO WEAR THEM WITH:
A prairie dress and cutesy bejewelled claw hairclips will make sure this outfit is the ideal mix of sweet and gothic.



£1,240, GIVENCHY

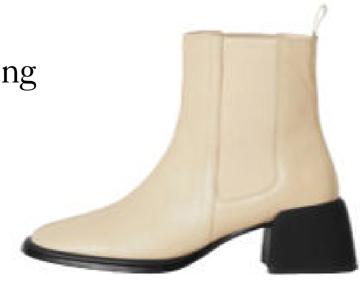


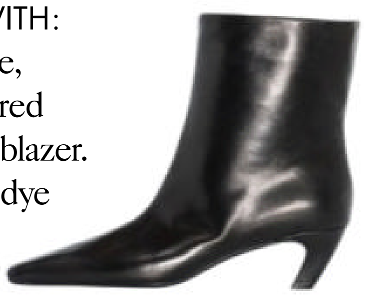
JIL SANDER

THE ALL-ROUNDER

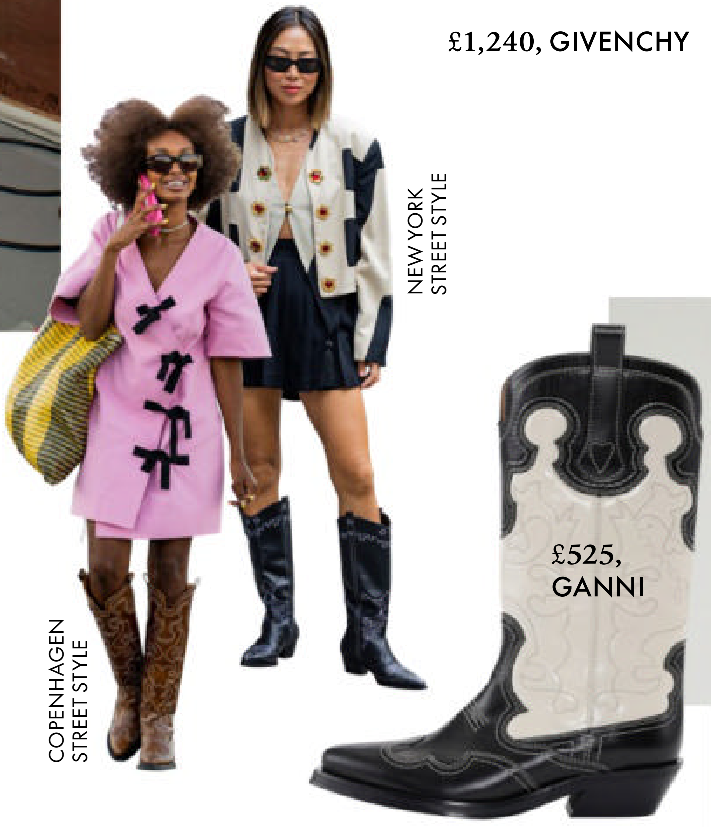
WHERE WE'VE SEEN IT:
Jil Sander
Even the downpour during Jil Sander's SS23 show couldn't dampen the desirability of these versatile boots. Boasting a satin finish and practical, walkable soles, these were a more slender but bolder version of the stacked heels we've seen in previous seasons.
WHAT TO WEAR THEM WITH:
Put the boots centre-stage, with neutral, sharply tailored trousers and an oversized blazer. Feeling playful? Add a tie-dye vest for colour.

£145, VAGABOND





£720, KHAITE



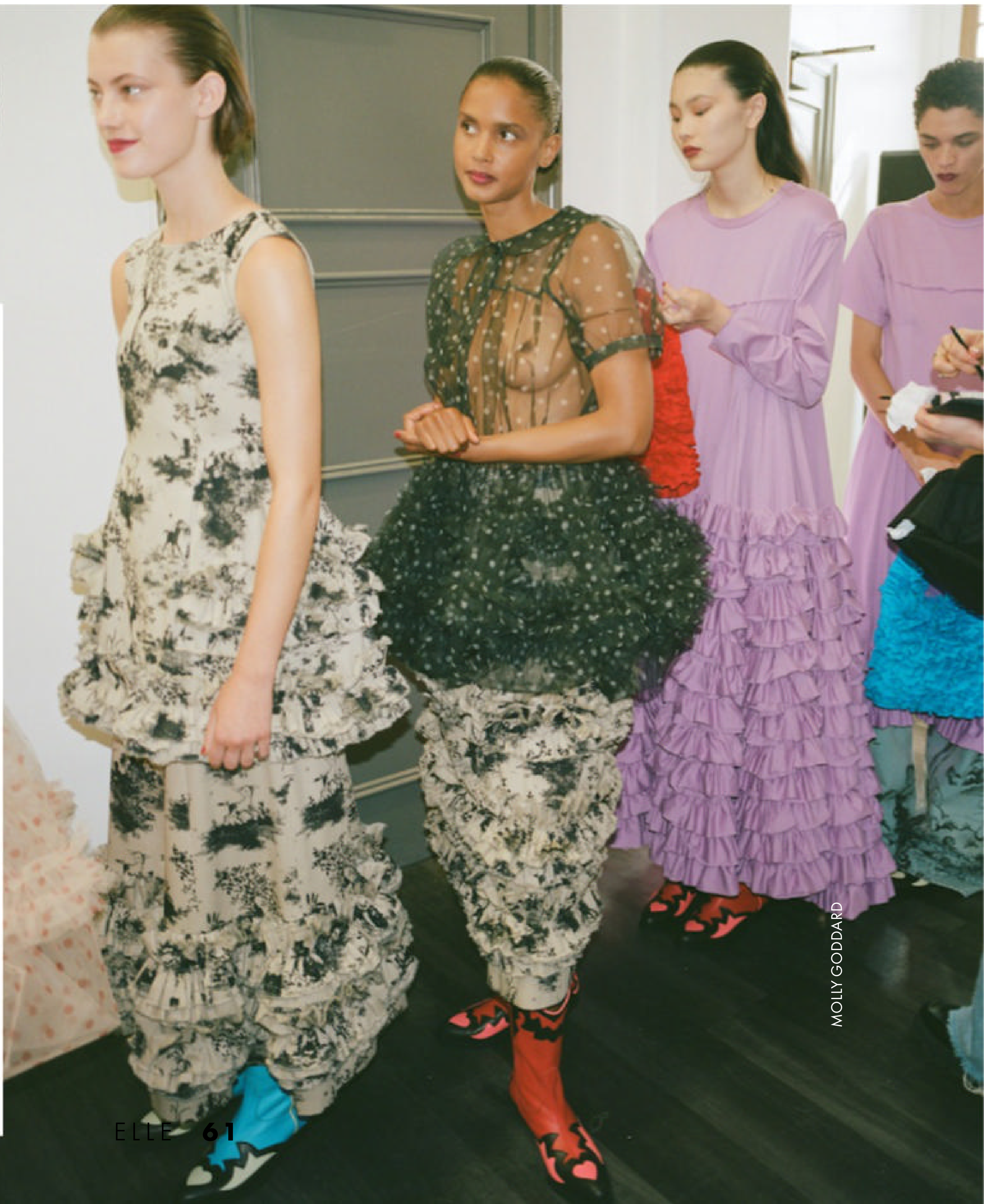
NEW YORK STREET STYLE

COPENHAGEN STREET STYLE

£525, GANNI

OLD WESTERN

WHERE WE'VE SEEN IT: *Kiko Kostadinov and Molly Goddard*
Laura and Deanna Fanning, creative directors of womenswear at Kiko Kostadinov, took cowboy boots for a spin this season. The result is captivating pointed versions with mesh inserts, emblazoned with illustrations in white and black. Molly Goddard also embraced the trend with gusto, with iterations in colours from clementine to sky blue.
WHAT TO WEAR THEM WITH: A pair of head-turning boots deserves an equally compelling outfit. Opt for a voluminous tulle number during the day and for the evening, go for a slinky slip dress or a denim skirt and a white vest top (think Prada's simple but effective contribution).



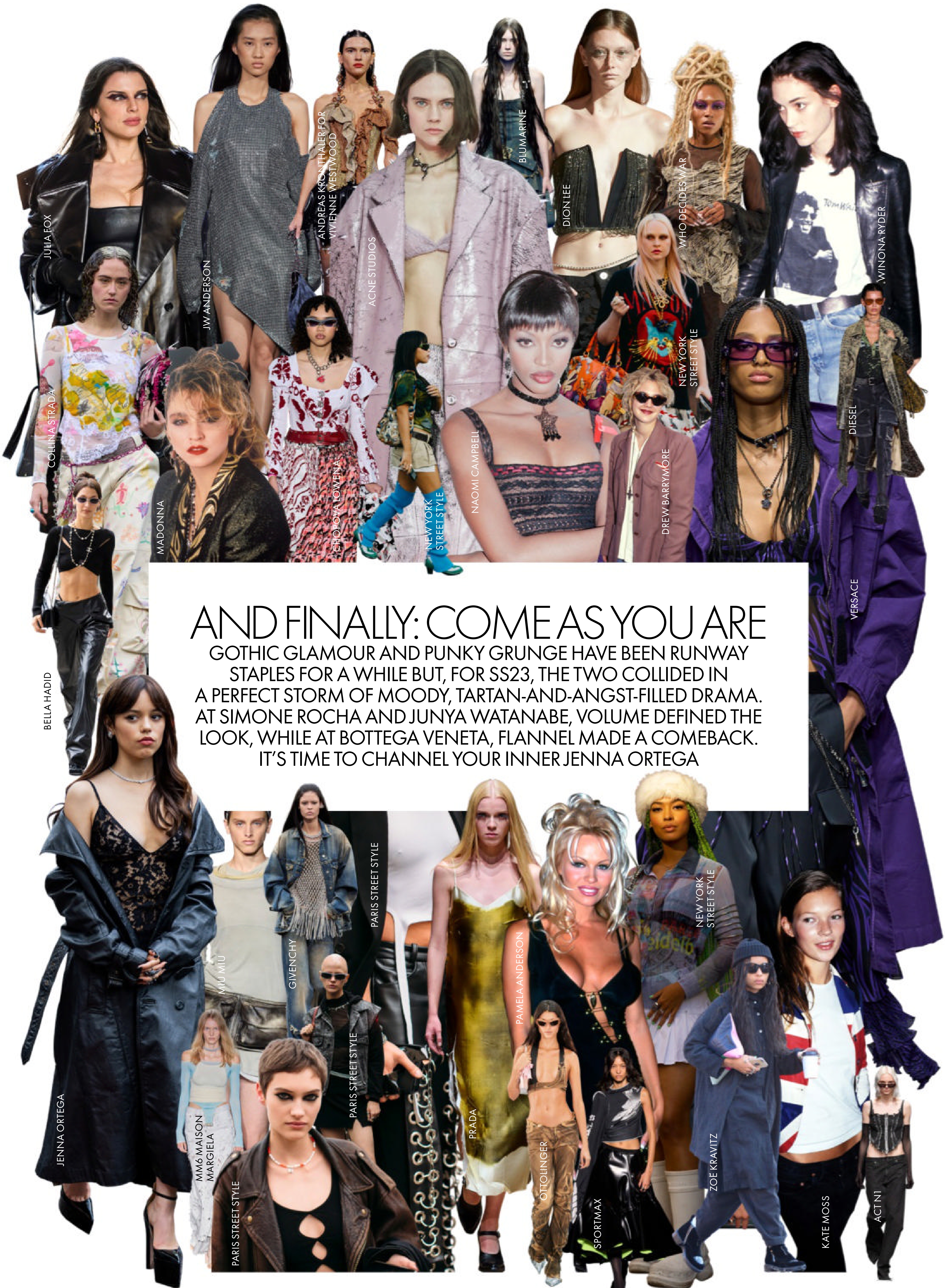
MOLLY GODDARD

PHOTOGRAPHS: ARTHUR WILLIAMS, IMAXTREE, GETTY IMAGES

Vivienne Westwood

Vivienne Westwood SS23

photographed by Juergen Teller


JULIA FOX
JW ANDERSON
ANDREAS KRONTHALER FOR VIVIENNE WESTWOOD
ACNE STUDIOS
BLUMARINE
DION LEE
WHO DECIDES WAR
WINONA RYDER
COLLINA STRADA
MADONNA
CHOPOVA LOWENA
NEW YORK STREET STYLE
NAOMI CAMPBELL
NEW YORK STREET STYLE
DREW BARRYMORE
DIESEL
VERSACE
BELLA HADID
JENNA ORTEGA
MIU MIU
GIVENCHY
PARIS STREET STYLE
MM6 MAISON MARGIELA
PARIS STREET STYLE
PARIS STREET STYLE
PRADA
PAMELA ANDERSON
OTTOLINGER
SPORTMAX
NEW YORK STREET STYLE
ZOË KRAVITZ
KATE MOSS
ACT N1

AND FINALLY: COME AS YOU ARE

GOTHIC GLAMOUR AND PUNKY GRUNGE HAVE BEEN RUNWAY STAPLES FOR A WHILE BUT, FOR SS23, THE TWO COLLIDED IN A PERFECT STORM OF MOODY, TARTAN-AND-ANGST-FILLED DRAMA. AT SIMONE ROCHA AND JUNYA WATANABE, VOLUME DEFINED THE LOOK, WHILE AT BOTTEGA VENETA, FLANNEL MADE A COMEBACK. IT'S TIME TO CHANNEL YOUR INNER JENNA ORTEGA

PHOTOGRAPHS: IMAXTREE, GETTY IMAGES, SHUTTERSTOCK

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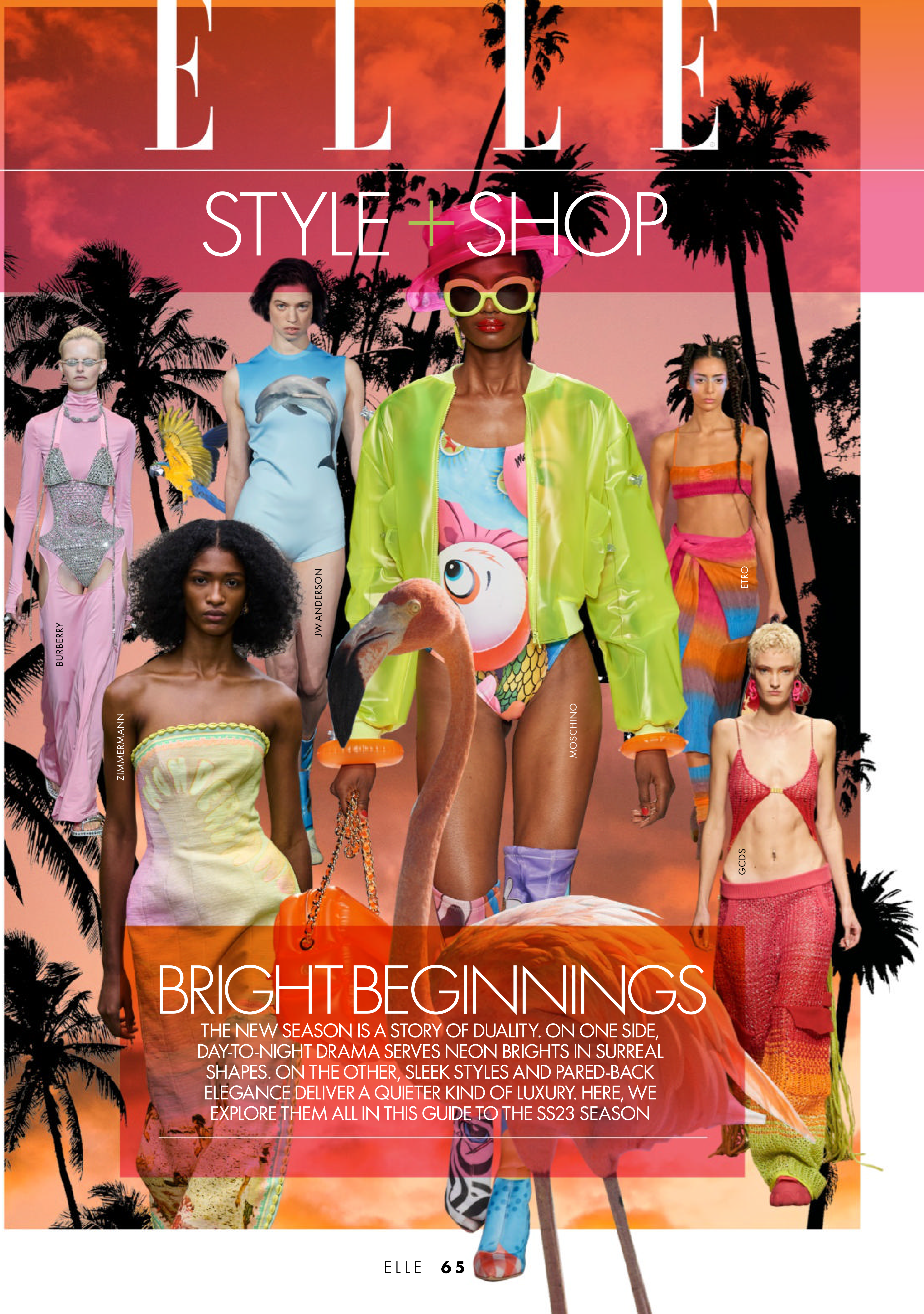

BURBERRY
JW ANDERSON
ZIMMERMANN
MOSCHINO
ETRO
GCDS

BRIGHT BEGINNINGS

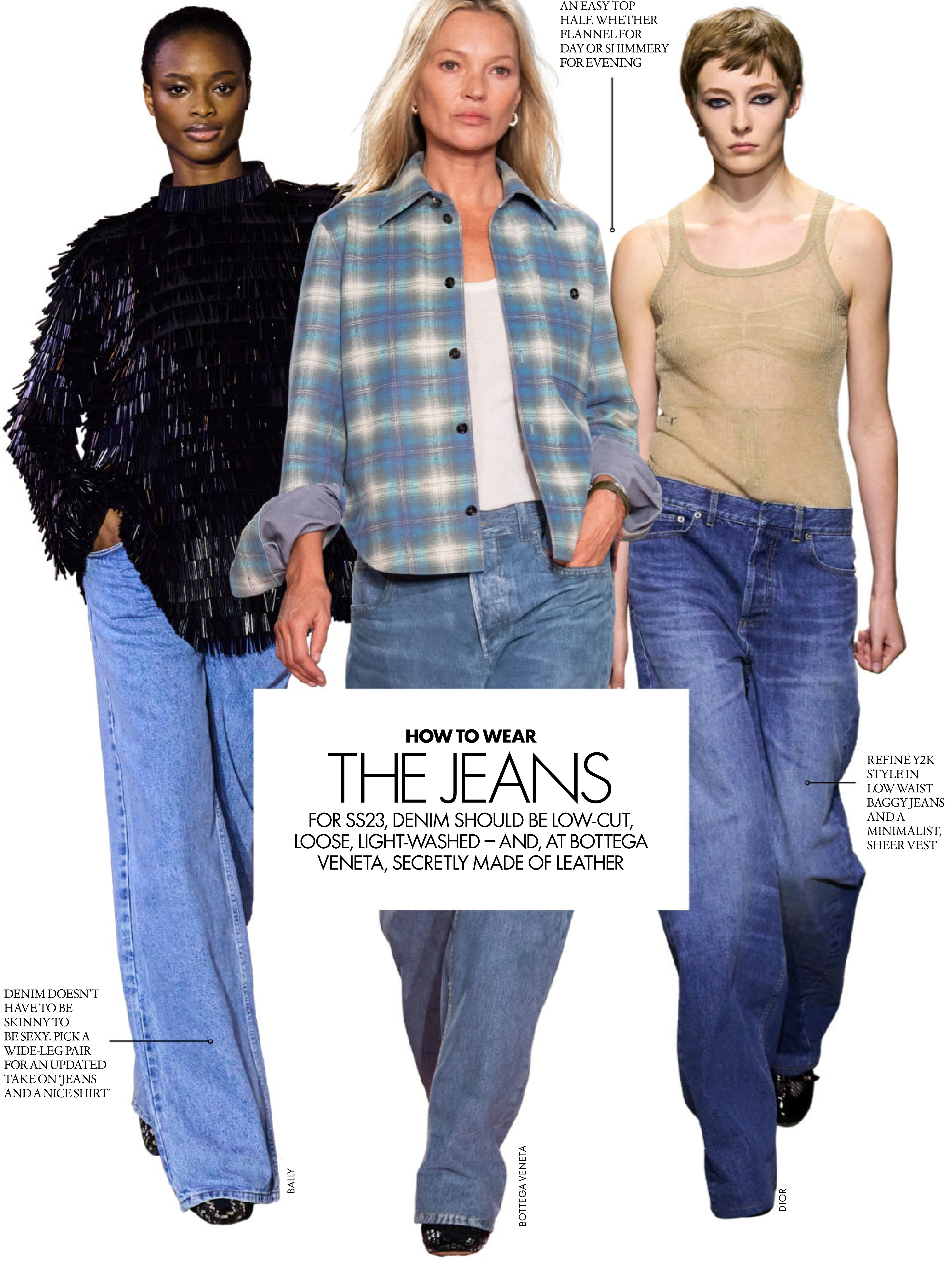
THE NEW SEASON IS A STORY OF DUALITY. ON ONE SIDE, DAY-TO-NIGHT DRAMA SERVES NEON BRIGHTS IN SURREAL SHAPES. ON THE OTHER, SLEEK STYLES AND PARED-BACK ELEGANCE DELIVER A QUIETER KIND OF LUXURY. HERE, WE EXPLORE THEM ALL IN THIS GUIDE TO THE SS23 SEASON

WORDS: ALICE WIGNALL. PHOTOGRAPHS: IMAXTREE; DEWANG GUPTA, KLARA KULIKOVA, RAOUL CROES, ROBERTO NICKSON, ALL AT UNSPLASH

HOW TO WEAR

THE JEANS

FOR SS23, DENIM SHOULD BE LOW-CUT, LOOSE, LIGHT-WASHED – AND, AT BOTTEGA VENETA, SECRETLY MADE OF LEATHER



THE BEST WAY TO STYLE SPRING'S DENIM? WITH AN EASY TOP HALF, WHETHER FLANNEL FOR DAY OR SHIMMERY FOR EVENING

REFINE Y2K STYLE IN LOW-WAIST BAGGY JEANS AND A MINIMALIST, SHEER VEST

DENIM DOESN'T HAVE TO BE SKINNY TO BE SEXY. PICK A WIDE-LEG PAIR FOR AN UPDATED TAKE ON 'JEANS AND A NICE SHIRT'

BALLY

BOTTEGA VENETA

DIOR

Bag, £360,
MARC JACOBS
at **SELFRIDGES**

Jacket, £560,
WARDROBE NYC

Skirt,
£365,
KENZO

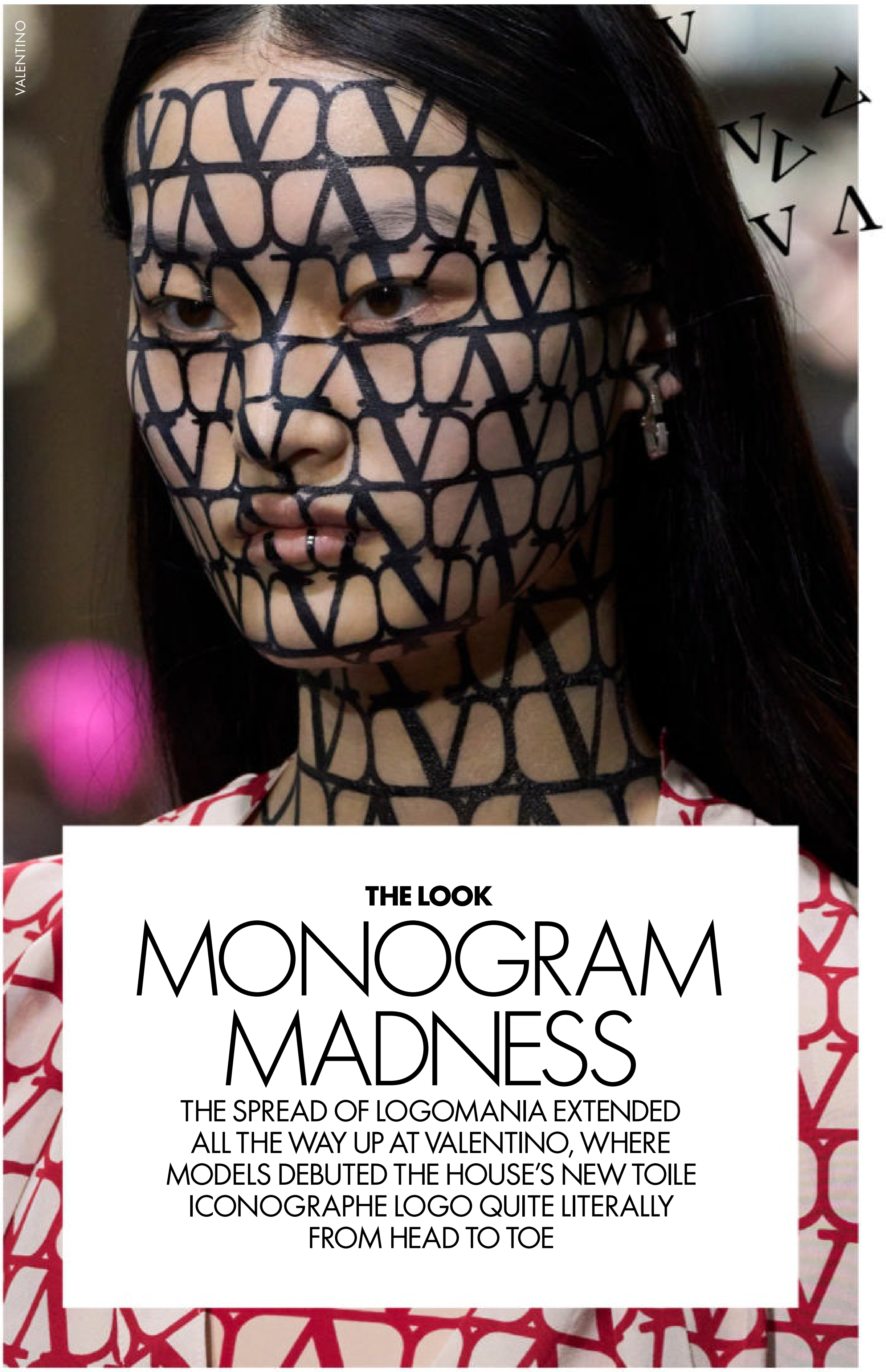
TRUE BLUES

THE BEST DENIM PIECES TO SEE YOU THROUGH THE SEASON – AND BEYOND

Jacket, £2,100,
GUCCI

Dress, £1,350,
ALEXANDER McCQUEEN
at **MYTHERESA**

Jeans, £100,
LEVI'S



VALENTINO

THE LOOK

MONOGRAM MADNESS

THE SPREAD OF LOGOMANIA EXTENDED ALL THE WAY UP AT VALENTINO, WHERE MODELS DEBUTED THE HOUSE'S NEW TOILE ICONOGRAPHE LOGO QUITE LITERALLY FROM HEAD TO TOE

THE TREND

HOW HIGH?

NOW THAT CELEBRITIES FROM KENDALL JENNER TO HAILEY BIEBER HAVE POPULARISED THE 'NO PANTS' TREND, IT'S NO SURPRISE TO SEE SHORTS GET CROPPED EVER HIGHER. FOR A MORE DAY-FRIENDLY SPIN, DO LIKE THE MAX MARA WOMAN AND PAIR WITH A BLAZER

COPERNI

CHANEL

MAX MARA

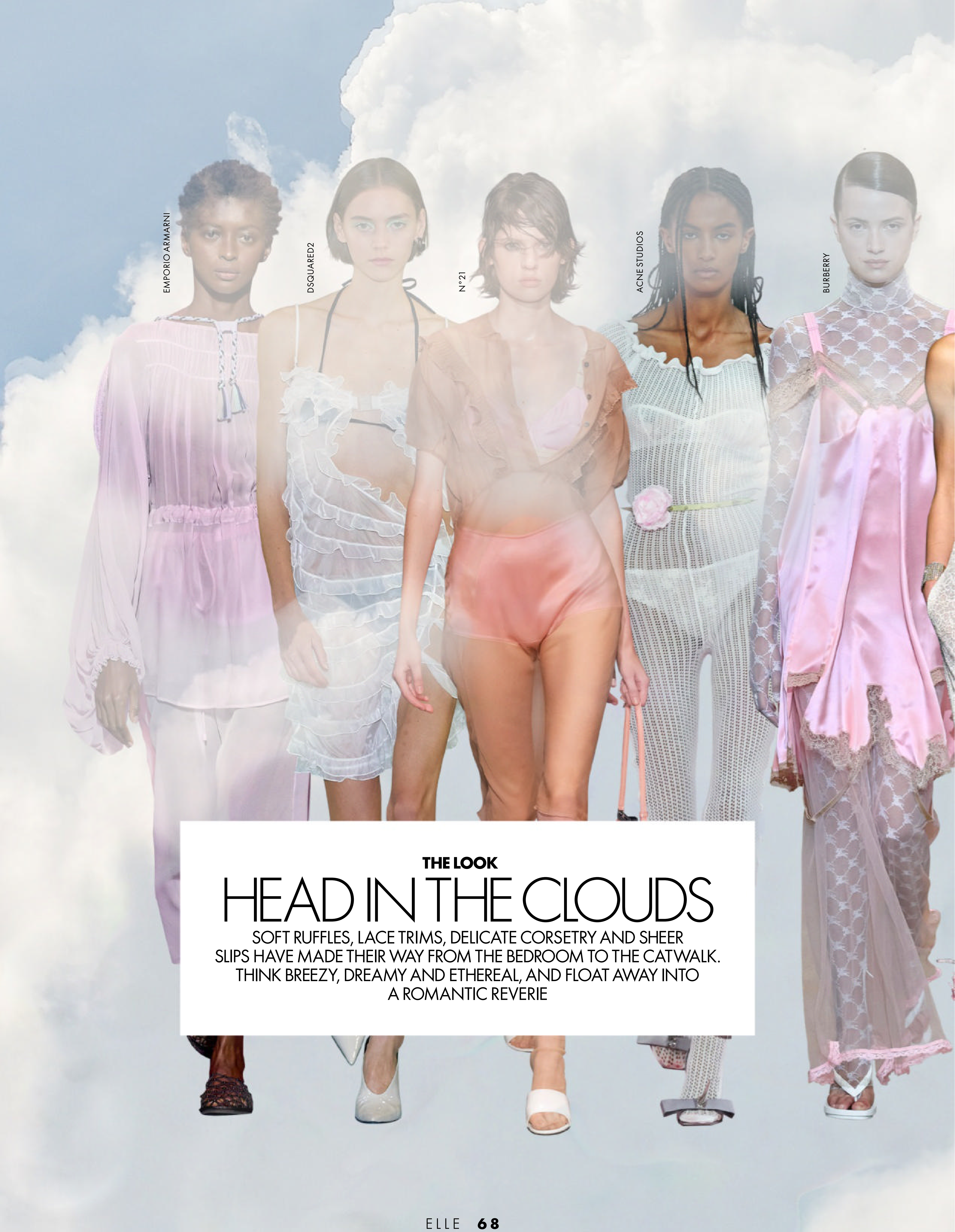
CHANEL

TOM FORD

ISABEL MARANT

LOEWE

WORDS: CLEMENTINA JACKSON


EMPORIO ARMARNI
DSQUARED2
N°21
ACNE STUDIOS
BURBERRY

THE LOOK

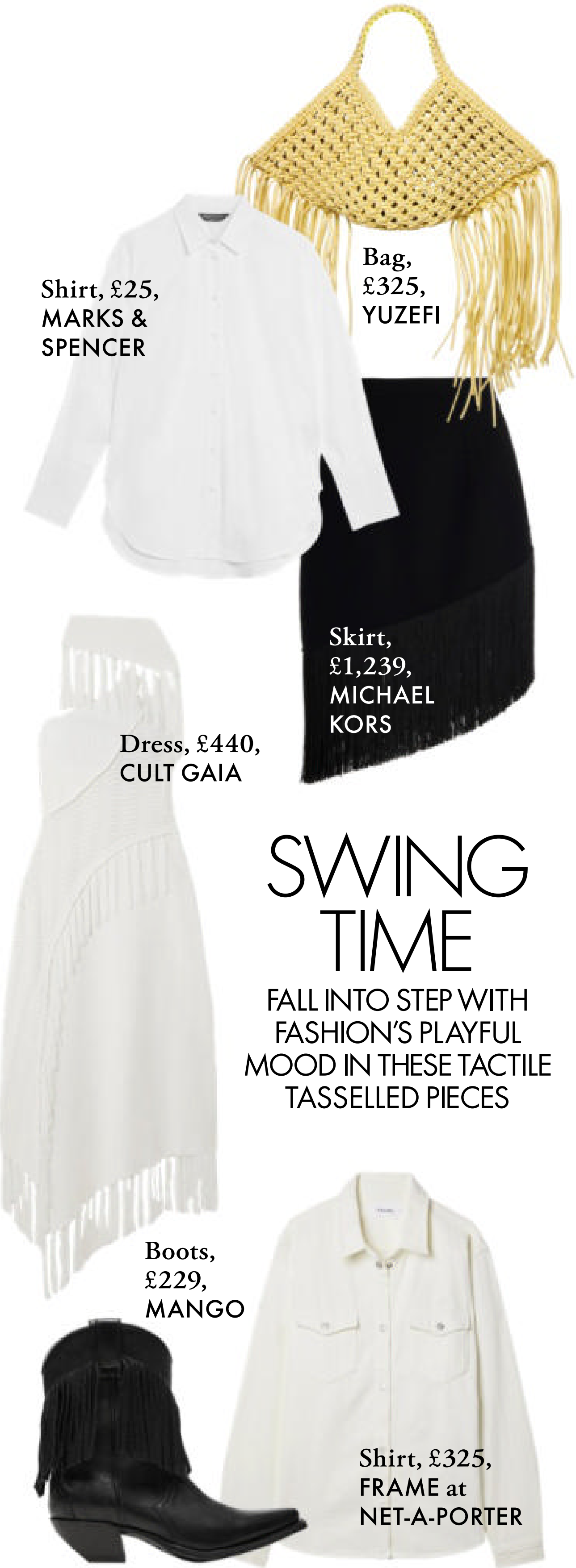
HEAD IN THE CLOUDS

SOFT RUFFLES, LACE TRIMS, DELICATE CORSETRY AND SHEER SLIPS HAVE MADE THEIR WAY FROM THE BEDROOM TO THE CATWALK. THINK BREEZY, DREAMY AND ETHEREAL, AND FLOAT AWAY INTO A ROMANTIC REVERIE

CHANEL
DIOR
ERDEM
SPORTMAX
NENSI DOJAKA

SWING TIME

FALL INTO STEP WITH FASHION'S PLAYFUL MOOD IN THESE TACTILE TASSELLED PIECES



Bag, £325, **YUZEFI**

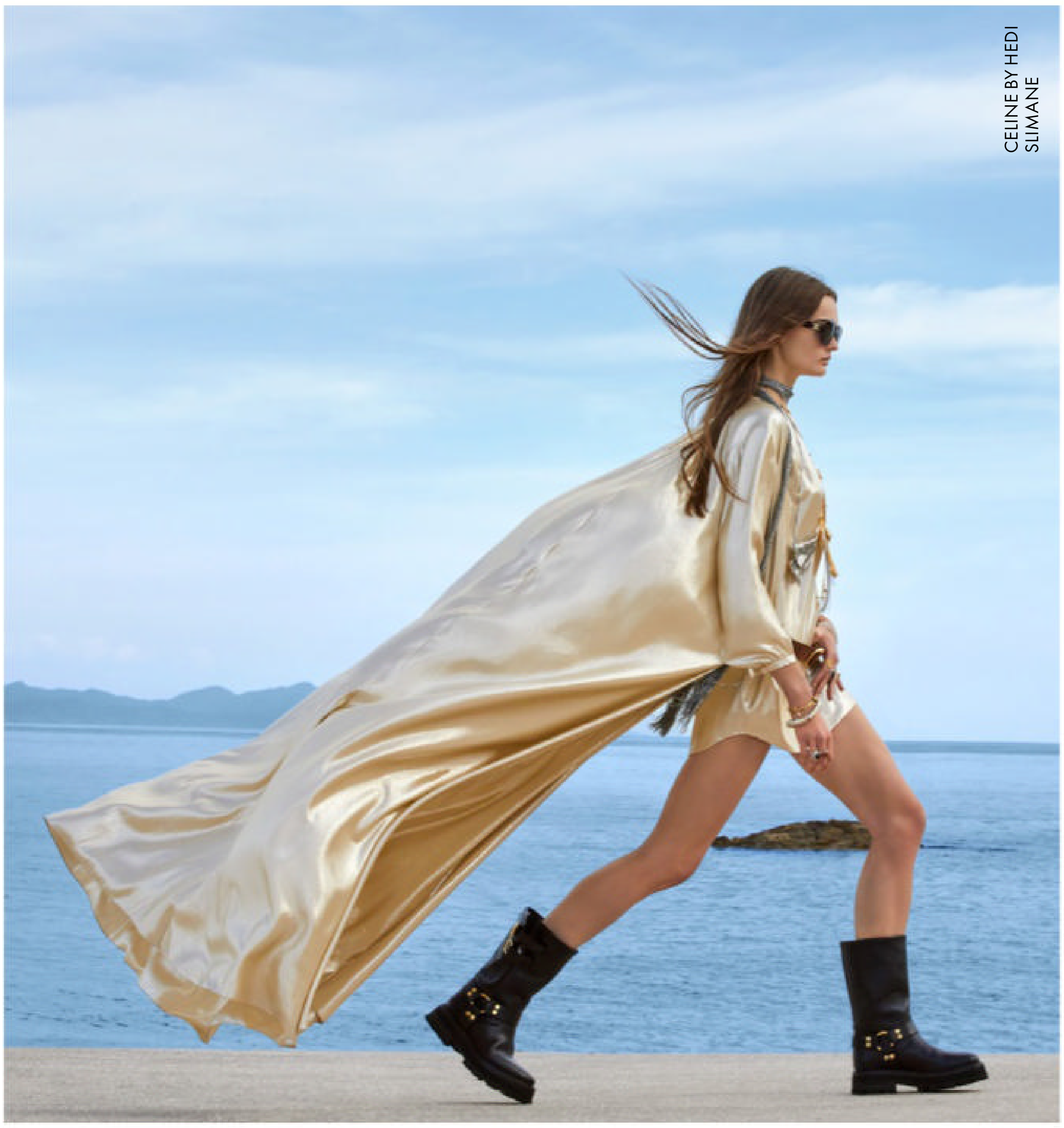
Shirt, £25, **MARKS & SPENCER**

Skirt, £1,239, **MICHAEL KORS**

Dress, £440, **CULT GAIA**

Boots, £229, **MANGO**

Shirt, £325, **FRAME** at **NET-A-PORTER**



CELINE BY HEDI SLIMANE

THE LOOK

ST TROPEZ SLEAZE

THE NOUGHTIES CALLED: THEY WANT THEIR INDIE-GIRL AESTHETIC BACK – BUT NOT BEFORE IT HAS ENJOYED A REFINED RIVIERA-CHIC REVAMP COURTESY OF HEDI SLIMANE AT CELINE. THINK GRUNGY BIKER BOOTS, HOTPANTS AND BLAZERS WITH A LUXE TWIST

THE TREND

FRINGE BENEFITS

FORGET THE RETRO CONNOTATIONS: THIS SEASON'S FRINGING IS AS MODERN AS IT GETS, AND A FABULOUS WAY OF ADDING A CHEERFUL FLOURISH TO ANY LOOK

MICHAEL KORS

MICHAEL KORS

SPORTMAX

ETRO

BOTTEGA VENETA

VERSACE

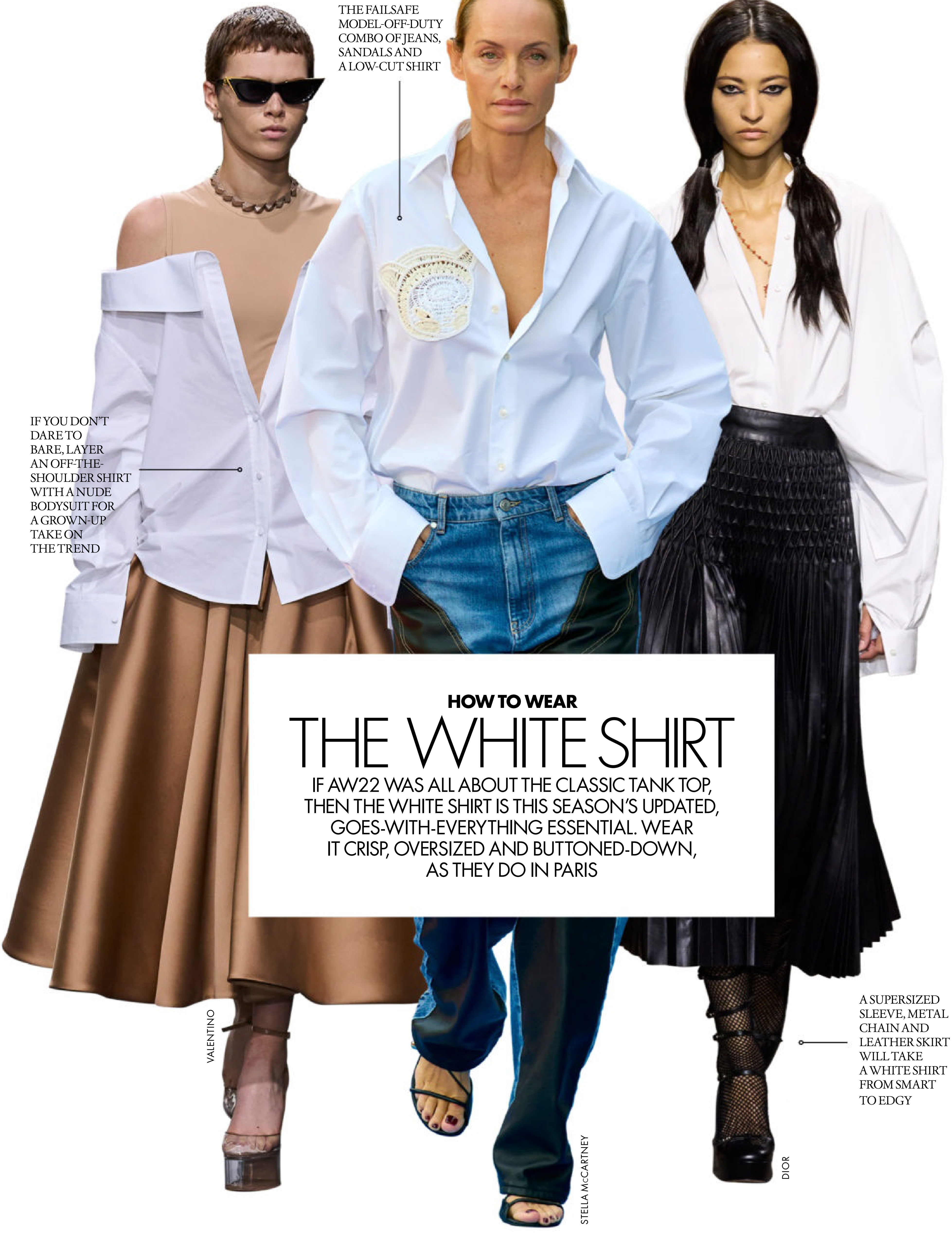
SACAI

VICTORIA BECKHAM

HOW TO WEAR

THE WHITE SHIRT

IF AW22 WAS ALL ABOUT THE CLASSIC TANK TOP, THEN THE WHITE SHIRT IS THIS SEASON'S UPDATED, GOES-WITH-EVERYTHING ESSENTIAL. WEAR IT CRISP, OVERSIZED AND BUTTONED-DOWN, AS THEY DO IN PARIS



SHOW OFF A SUN-KISSED GLOW WITH THE FAILSAFE MODEL-OFF-DUTY COMBO OF JEANS, SANDALS AND A LOW-CUT SHIRT

IF YOU DON'T DARE TO BARE, LAYER AN OFF-THE-SHOULDER SHIRT WITH A NUDE BODYSUIT FOR A GROWN-UP TAKE ON THE TREND

A SUPERSIZED SLEEVE, METAL CHAIN AND LEATHER SKIRT WILL TAKE A WHITE SHIRT FROM SMART TO EDGY

VALENTINO

STELLA McCARTNEY

DIOR

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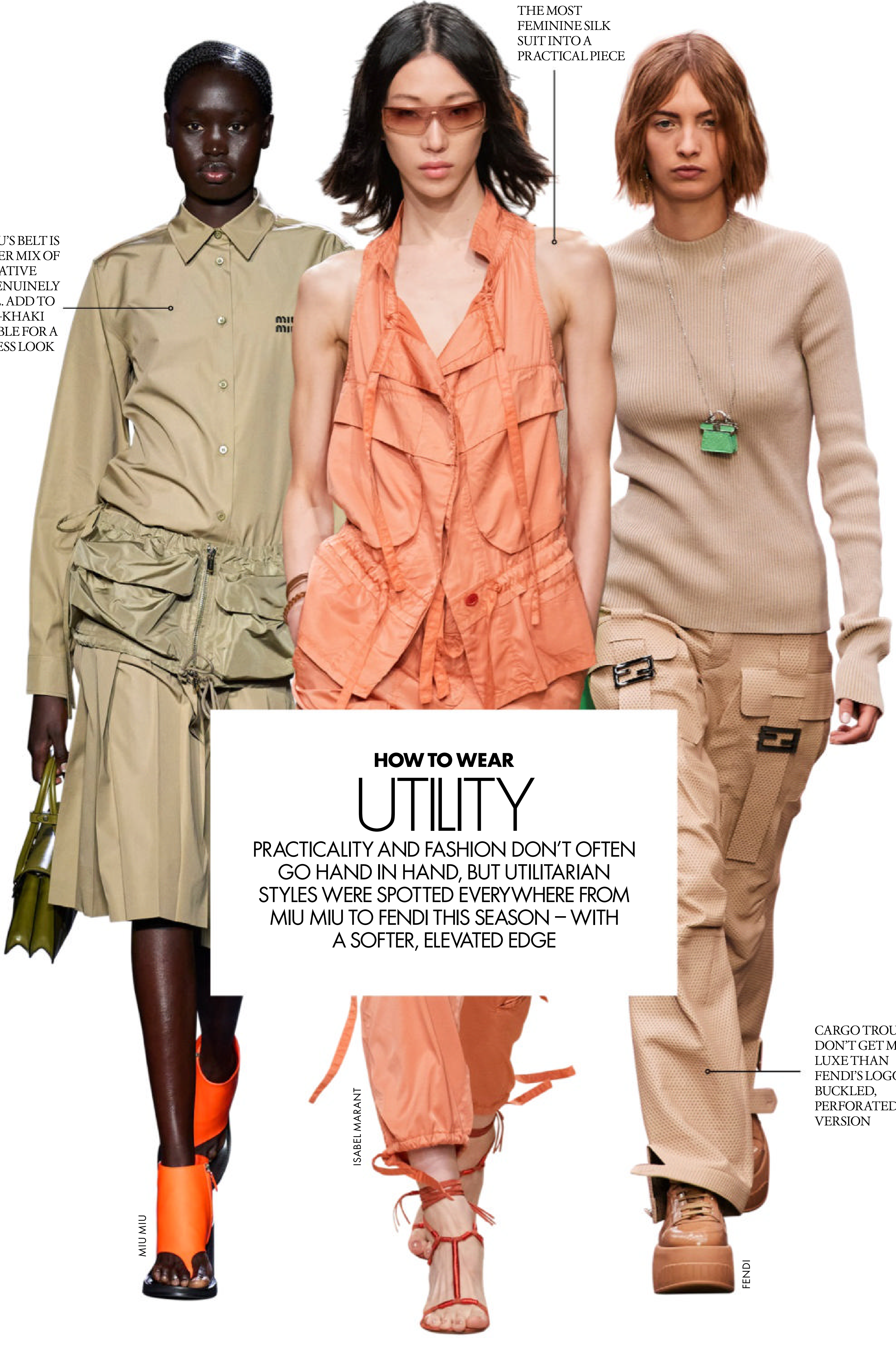


HOW TO WEAR

UTILITY

PRACTICALITY AND FASHION DON'T OFTEN GO HAND IN HAND, BUT UTILITARIAN STYLES WERE SPOTTED EVERYWHERE FROM MIU MIU TO FENDI THIS SEASON – WITH A SOFTER, ELEVATED EDGE

MIU MIU'S BELT IS A CLEVER MIX OF DECORATIVE AND GENUINELY USEFUL. ADD TO AN ALL-KHAKI ENSEMBLE FOR A SEAMLESS LOOK

POCKETS AND DRAWSTRINGS CAN TRANSFORM THE MOST FEMININE SILK SUIT INTO A PRACTICAL PIECE

CARGO TROUSERS DON'T GET MORE LUXE THAN FENDI'S LOGO-BUCKLED, PERFORATED VERSION

FASHION EDITOR ELLE INTERNATIONAL: CHARLOTTE DEFFE. FASHION PRODUCER ELLE INTERNATIONAL: YANNICKSELVA. ARTISTIC CONSULTANT: TOM MEREDITH. CREATIVE DIRECTOR: JO GOODBY. FASHION WRITER: CLEMENTINA JACKSON. PRODUCTION CO-ORDINATORS: MARINE LE BRIS AND PASCAL IACONO. CATWALK PHOTOGRAPHS: IMAXTREE

ALAÏA
ISABEL MARRANT
DOLCE & GABBANA
PHILOSOPHY DI LORENZO SERAFINI
GIVENCHY
TOD'S

THE TREND

SKINTIGHT

SS23 PUTS THE FIGURE CENTRE-STAGE WITH BODY-CON STYLES THAT HUG THE CURVES

THE LOOK

GET CRAFTY

IRONS ARE OVER! CREASES, CRINKLES AND LIVED-IN LOOKS RULED THE RUNWAY (SEE PRADA FOR DETAILS), WHILE HAPHAZARDLY PLACED, HOME-STYLE CORSAGES ADDED A LAST-MINUTE DASH OF ELEGANCE TO THE EVERYDAY

PRACTICAL MAGIC

EMBRACE POCKETS, FUNCTIONALITY AND A COMFORTING PALETTE OF KHAKIS

Trousers, £69, ARKET

Bag, £3,600, FENDI

Boots, £345, GANNI

Jacket, £200, THE FRANKIE SHOP

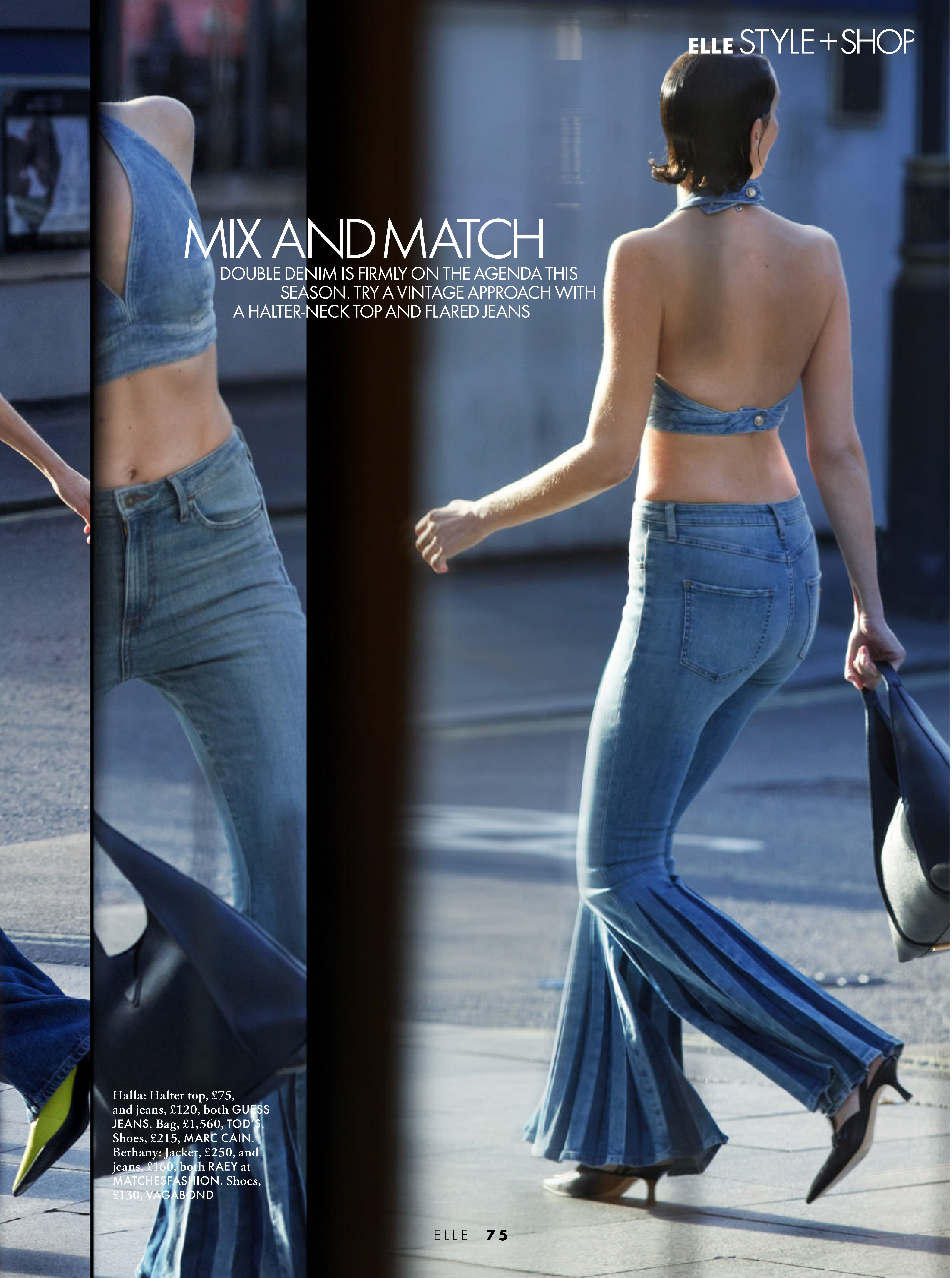
Trousers, £850, THE ATTICO at SELFRIDGES

THE EDIT

SKIN IN THE GAME

THIS SPRING, THE RULES DO NOT APPLY. BOUDOIR-ESQUE DRESSING, ARRESTING DENIM AND HIGHLIGHER BRIGHTS ARE ON THE MOOD BOARD

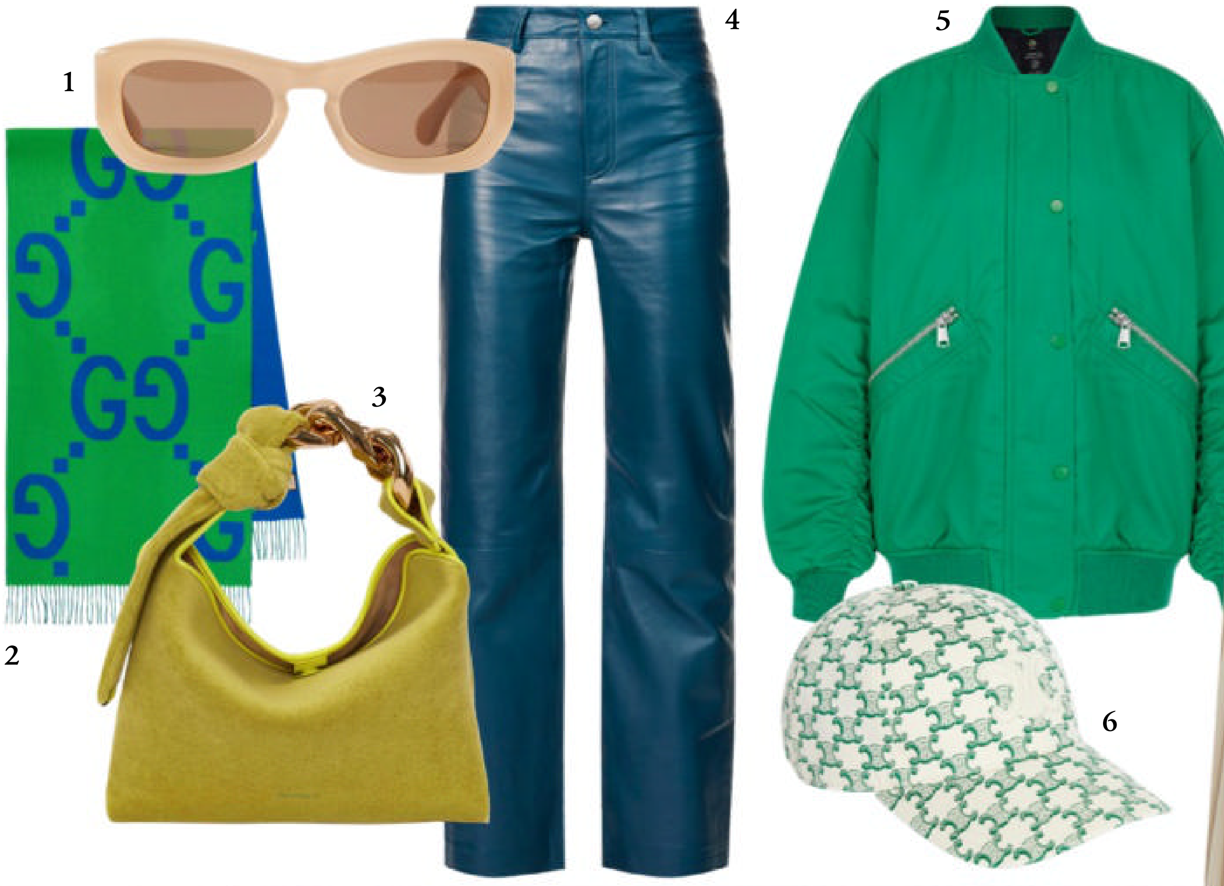
PHOTOGRAPHS BY LUC BRAQUET WORDS BY EVE WALKER STYLING BY GEORGIA MEDLEY SHOPPING BY GRACE CLARKE

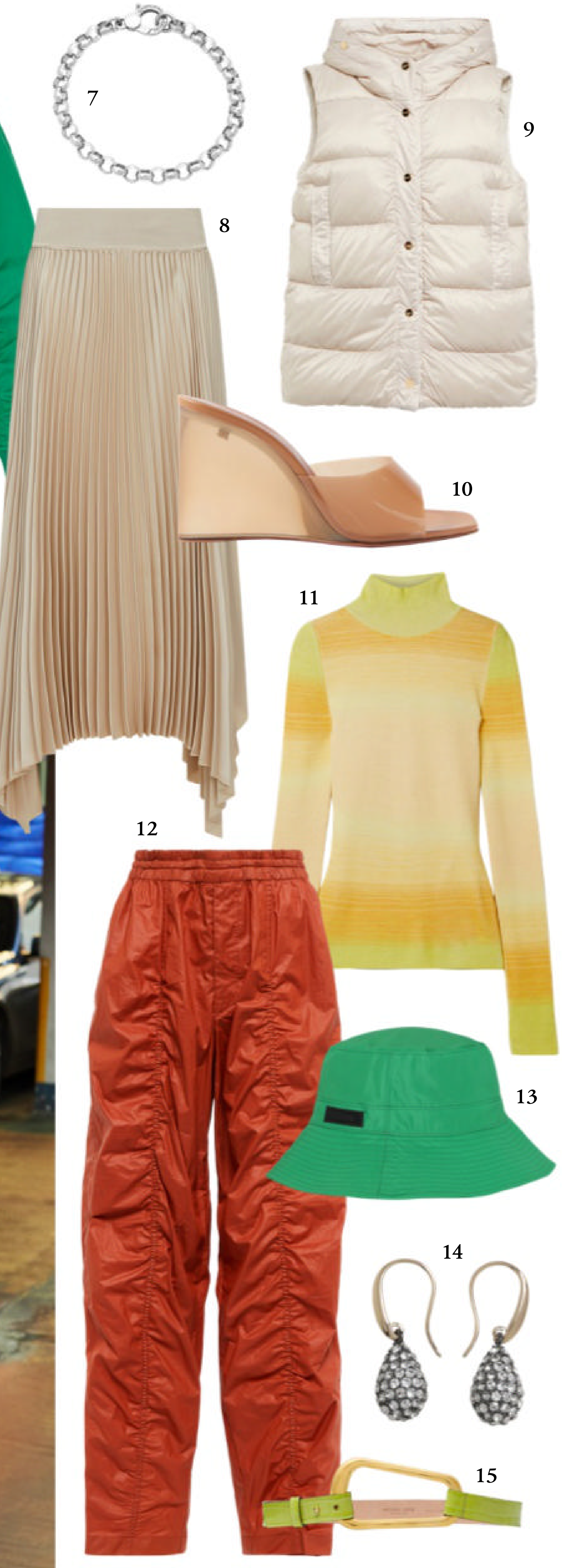


MIX AND MATCH

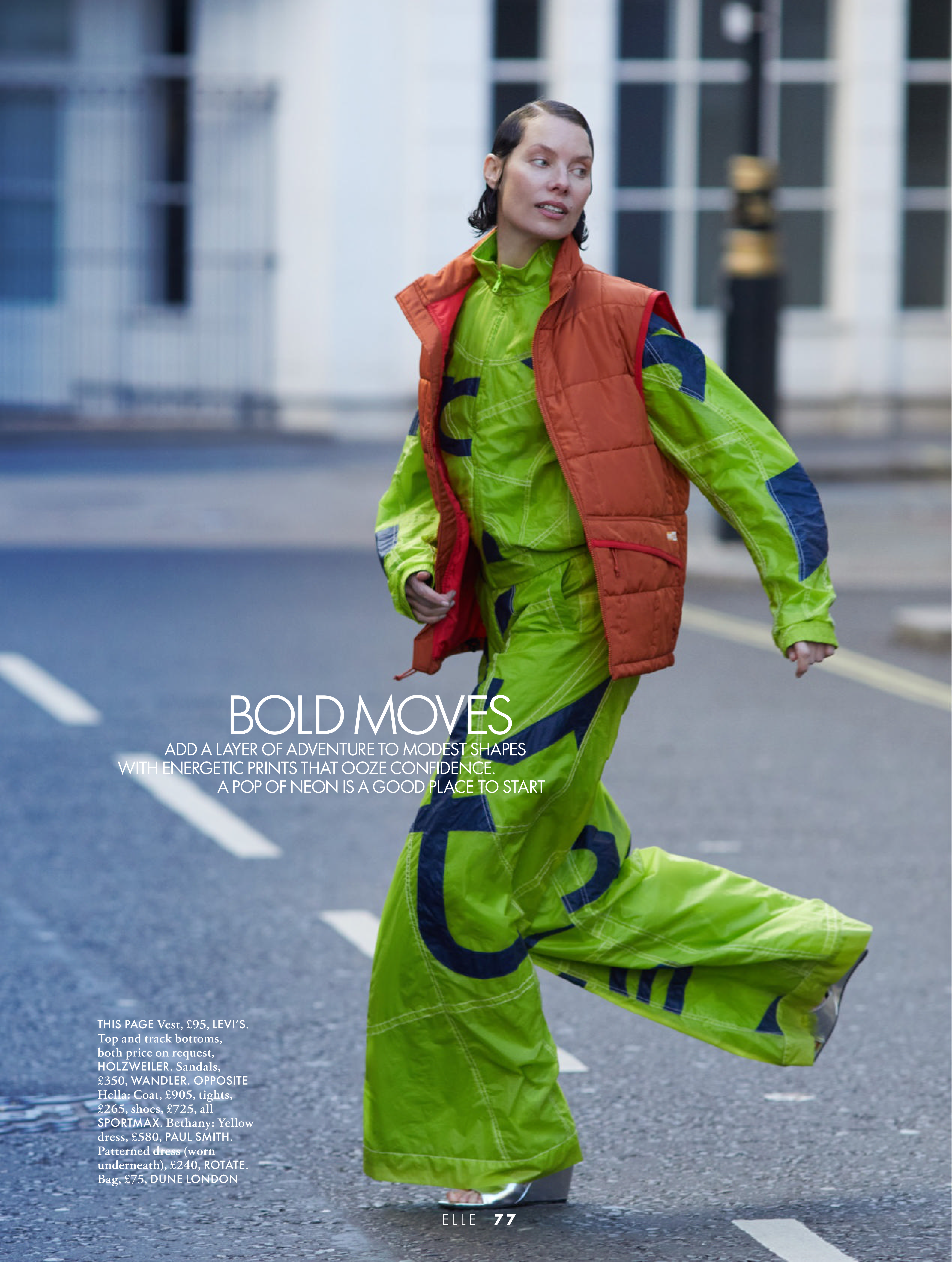
DOUBLE DENIM IS FIRMLY ON THE AGENDA THIS SEASON. TRY A VINTAGE APPROACH WITH A HALTER-NECK TOP AND FLARED JEANS

Halla: Halter top, £75, and jeans, £120, both GUESS JEANS. Bag, £1,560, TOD'S. Shoes, £215, MARC CAIN. Bethany: Jacket, £250, and jeans, £160, both RAEY at MATCHESFASHION. Shoes, £130, VAGABOND





1 Sunglasses, £245, PORT TANGER **2** Scarf, £610, GUCCI at MYTHERESA **3** Bag, £790, JW ANDERSON **4** Trousers, £370, REMAIN BIRGER CHRISTENSEN **5** Jacket, £72, NEXT **6** Hat, £385, CELINE BY HEDI SLIMANE **7** Bracelet, £70, GIOVANNI RASPINI **8** Skirt, £345, JOSEPH **9** Gilet, £510, MAX MARA **10** Sandals, £840, AMINA MUADDI **11** Jumper, £330, CORDOVA at NET-A-PORTER **12** Trousers, £550, ISABEL MARANT **13** Hat, £85, GANNI **14** Earrings, £12.50, MARKS & SPENCER **15** Belt, £440, MICHAEL KORS



BOLD MOVES

ADD A LAYER OF ADVENTURE TO MODEST SHAPES WITH ENERGETIC PRINTS THAT OOZE CONFIDENCE. A POP OF NEON IS A GOOD PLACE TO START

THIS PAGE Vest, £95, **LEVI'S**. Top and track bottoms, both price on request, **HOLZWEILER**. Sandals, £350, **WANDLER**. **OPPOSITE** Hella: Coat, £905, tights, £265, shoes, £725, all **SPORTMAX**. Bethany: Yellow dress, £580, **PAUL SMITH**. Patterned dress (worn underneath), £240, **ROTATE**. Bag, £75, **DUNE LONDON**

NUDE ATTITUDE

USE TONAL HUES AS A POLISHED, GROWN-UP COUNTERPOINT TO SHEER SEPARATES AND BODY-SCULPTING SHORTS

THIS PAGE Top, £330, TORY BURCH. Shorts, £890, ISABEL MARANT. Sandals, £100, DUNE LONDON. Bag, price on request, WANDLER. OPPOSITE: Jacket, £895, RAEY at MATCHESFASHION. Top, £295, and skirt, £209, both LUISA SPAGNOLI. Belt, price on request, HOLZWEILER. Socks, £45, RAEY at MATCHESFASHION. Trainers, £90, ADIDAS

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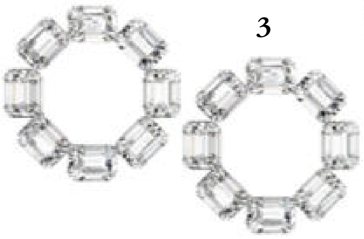

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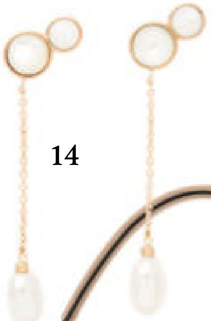

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1 Jacket, £700, DIESEL **2** Dress, price on request, REJINA PYO **3** Earrings, £300, SWAROVSKI **4** Dress, £465, ANNA OCTOBER **5** Sandals, £440, WANDLER **6** Trainers, £135, NIKE **7** Bag, £310, POLENE PARIS **8** Trousers, £75, AMY LYNN at SELFRIDGES **9** Bag, £145, MARC CAIN **10** Shoes, £825, ALAÏA **11** Top, £425, ISABEL MARANT **12** Shoes, £420, TOTEME **13** Dress, £3,100, STELLA McCARTNEY **14** Earrings, £395, CHLOÉ **15** Bag, £1,930, TOD'S

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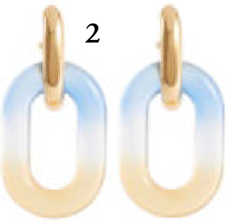

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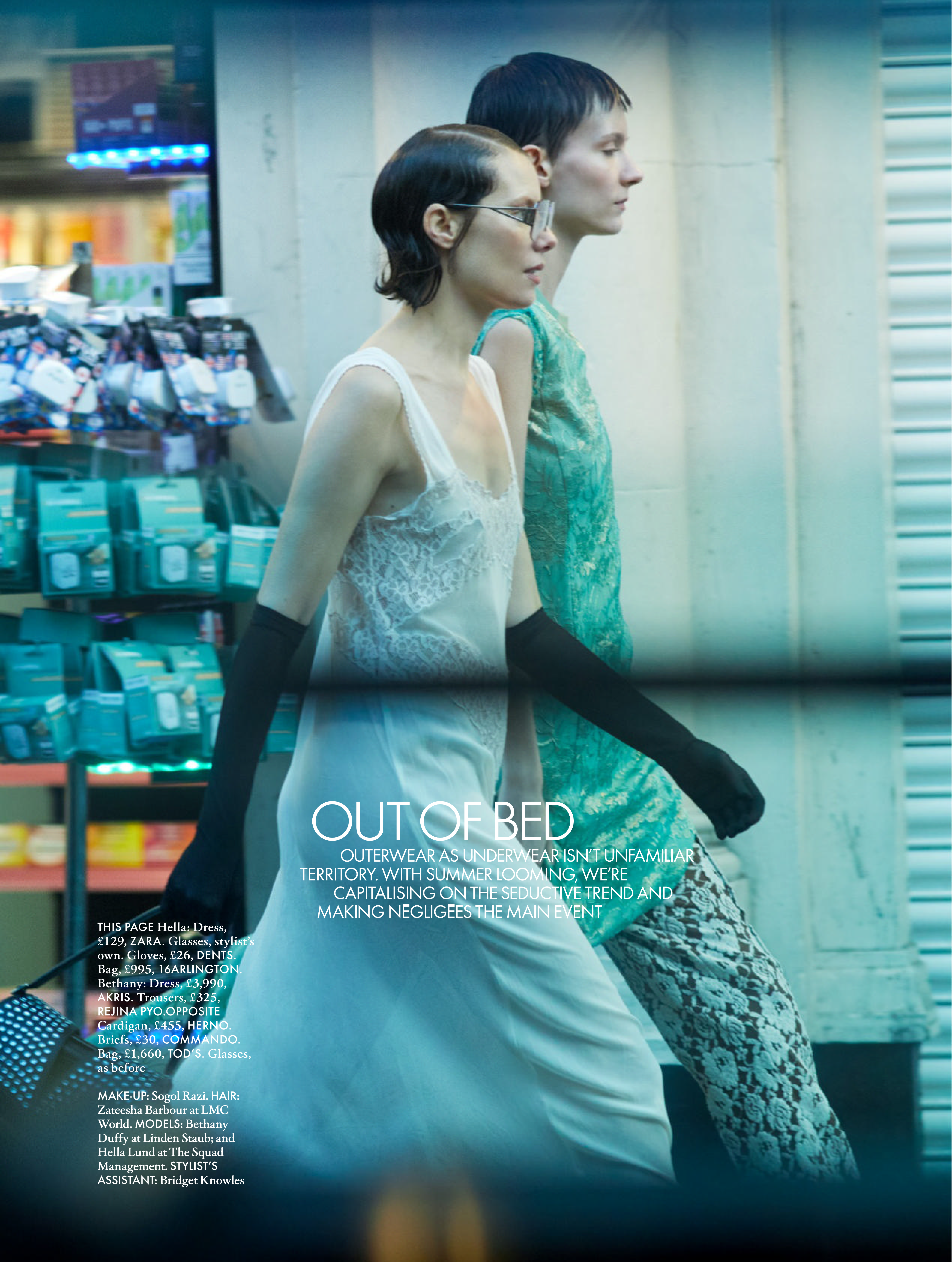
1 Briefs, £185, DOLCE & GABBANA
2 Earrings, £330, PACO RABANNE
3 Sunglasses, £430, DIOR **4** Top, £290, EMPORIO ARMANI **5** Mules, £790, ALEXANDER McQUEEN
6 Coat, £2,800, THE ATTICO **7** Bracelet, £150, VIVIENNE WESTWOOD **8** Scarf, £430, LOEWE **9** Cardigan, £250, FIORUCCI
10 Bag, £3,310, COPERNI X HEVEN
11 Trousers, £364, AGOLDE at MYTHERESA **12** Trainers, £100, ADIDAS
13 Body, £665, NENSI DOJAKA **14** Dress, £190, YAITTE **15** Sunglasses, £330, FENDI



OUT OF BED

OUTERWEAR AS UNDERWEAR ISN'T UNFAMILIAR TERRITORY. WITH SUMMER LOOMING, WE'RE CAPITALISING ON THE SEDUCTIVE TREND AND MAKING NĒGLIGĒES THE MAIN EVENT

THIS PAGE Hella: Dress, £129, ZARA. Glasses, stylist's own. Gloves, £26, DENTS. Bag, £995, 16ARLINGTON. Bethany: Dress, £3,990, AKRIS. Trousers, £325, REJINA PYO.OPPOSITE Cardigan, £455, HERNO. Briefs, £30, COMMANDO. Bag, £1,660, TOD'S. Glasses, as before

MAKE-UP: Sogol Razi. HAIR: Zateesha Barbour at LMC World. MODELS: Bethany Duffy at Linden Staub; and Hella Lund at The Squad Management. STYLIST'S ASSISTANT: Bridget Knowles

NEW IN

A PLAYFUL TAKE

EASE INTO A WARMER, LIGHTER MOOD FOR SPRING WITH SHOES AND BAGS THAT ADD COLOUR, PRINT AND JOY TO EVERY LOOK

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CARLA GULER WORDS BY EVE WALKER STYLING BY GEORGIA MEDLEY

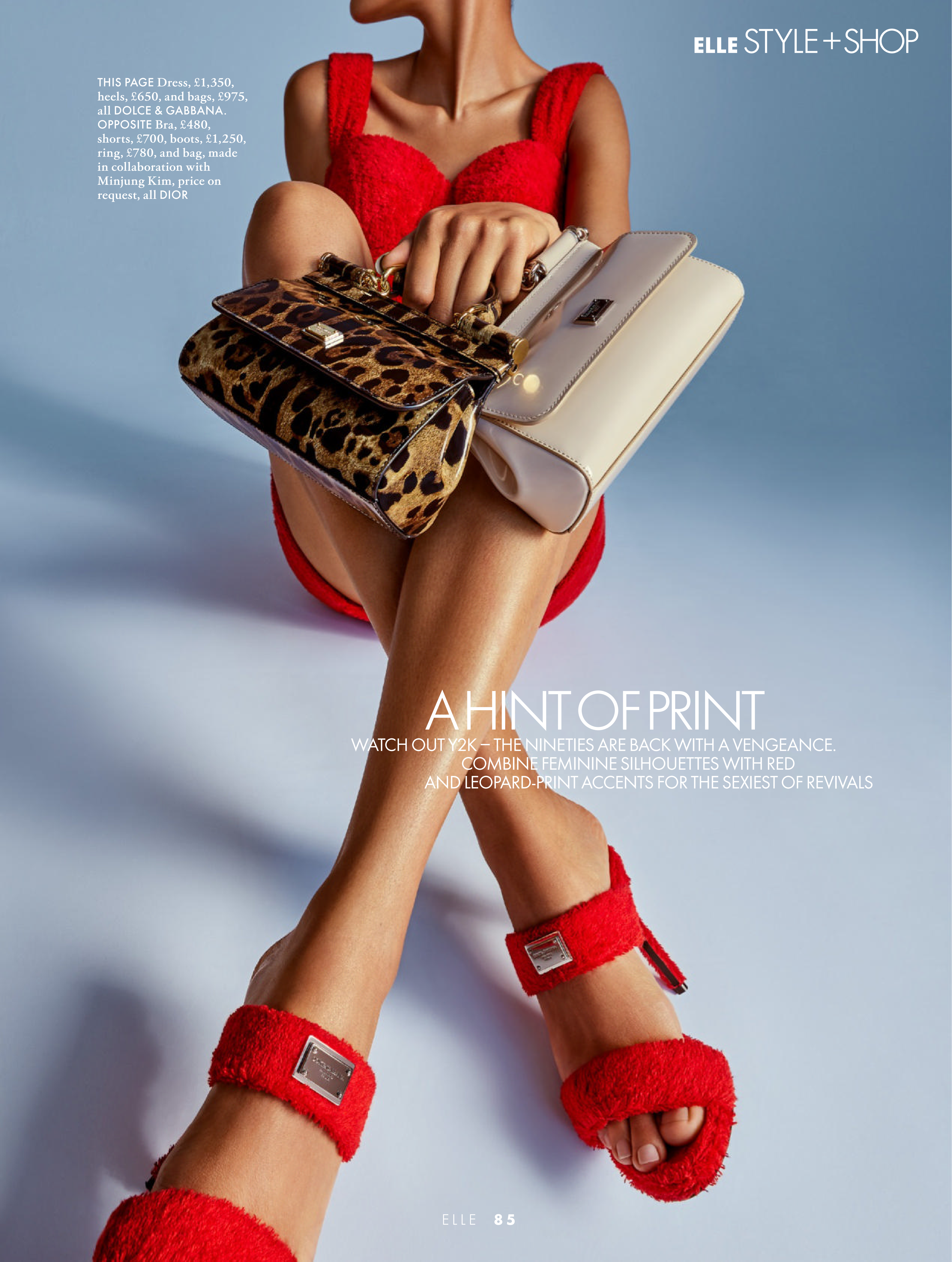
THIS PAGE Bracelets, from £1,460, earrings, £1,045, necklace, £1,180, bag, £4,265, and purse, £4,090, all CHANEL. OPPOSITE Dress, £4,100, bag, £4,300, and boots, £1,190, all FENDI

LET IT SHINE

SOPHISTICATED GLITZ AT ITS FINEST, QUILTED BAGS WITH CHAIN JEWELS GIVE A JOLT OF ENERGY TO NEUTRAL LOOKS

MAKING WAVES

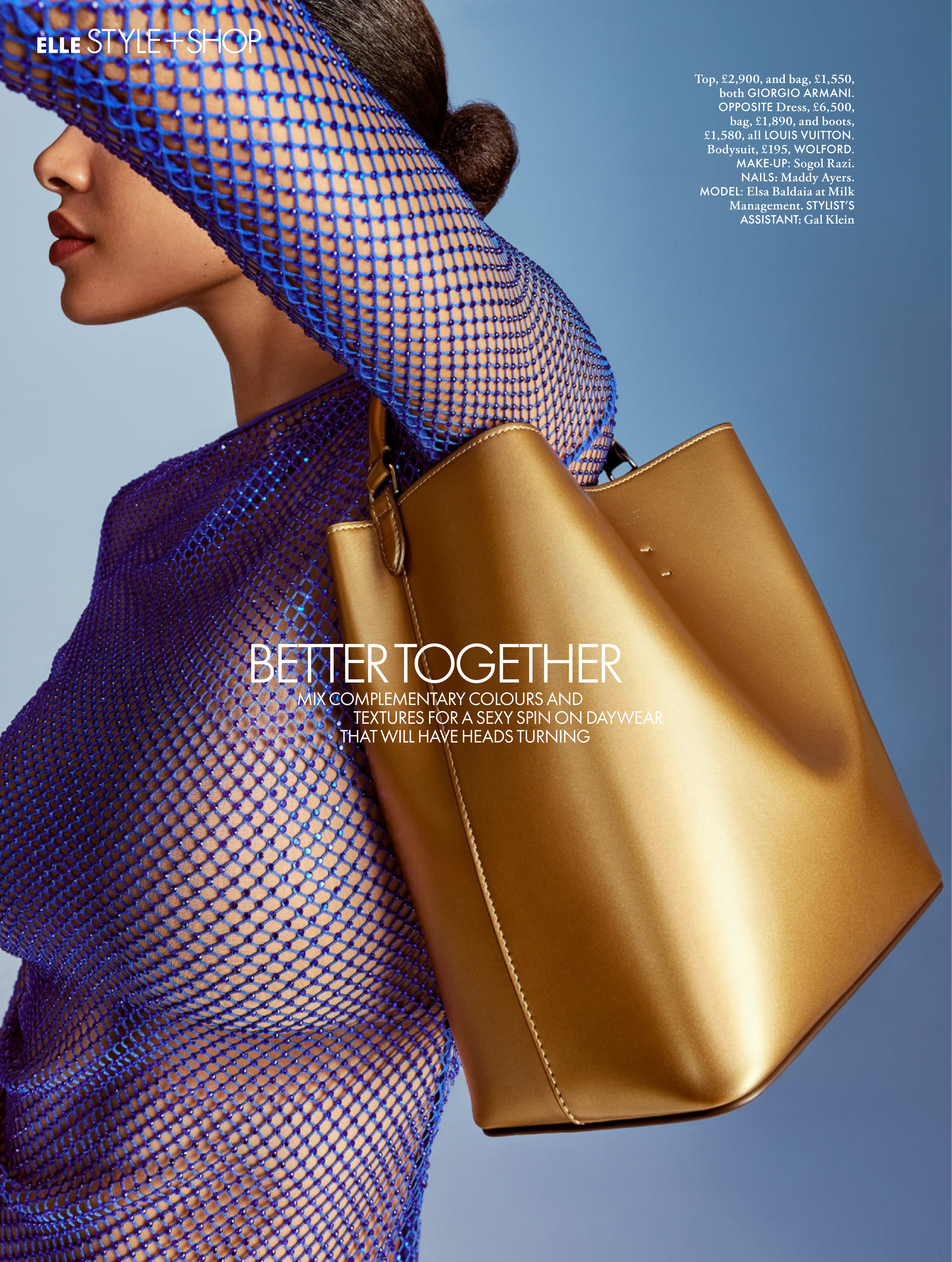
WHO SAYS A CLASSIC HANDBAG NEED BE PLAIN? THIS LADY DIOR'S DARING COLOUR STORY IS AS TIMELESS AS IT IS AUDACIOUS



THIS PAGE Dress, £1,350, heels, £650, and bags, £975, all DOLCE & GABBANA. OPPOSITE Bra, £480, shorts, £700, boots, £1,250, ring, £780, and bag, made in collaboration with Minjung Kim, price on request, all DIOR

A HINT OF PRINT

WATCH OUT Y2K – THE NINETIES ARE BACK WITH A VENGEANCE. COMBINE FEMININE SILHOUETTES WITH RED AND LEOPARD-PRINT ACCENTS FOR THE SEXIEST OF REVIVALS



Top, £2,900, and bag, £1,550, both GIORGIO ARMANI. OPPOSITE Dress, £6,500, bag, £1,890, and boots, £1,580, all LOUIS VUITTON. Bodysuit, £195, WOLFORD. MAKE-UP: Sogol Razi. NAILS: Maddy Ayers. MODEL: Elsa Baldaia at Milk Management. STYLIST'S ASSISTANT: Gal Klein

BETTER TOGETHER

MIX COMPLEMENTARY COLOURS AND TEXTURES FOR A SEXY SPIN ON DAYWEAR THAT WILL HAVE HEADS TURNING

DOWN TO EARTH

FOR A LESS OBVIOUS TAKE ON MONOCHROME THAN BLACK AND WHITE, TURN TO NATURE FOR YOUR PALETTE, WITH A COMBINATION OF EARTHY TOBACCO, TAN AND PINE GREEN

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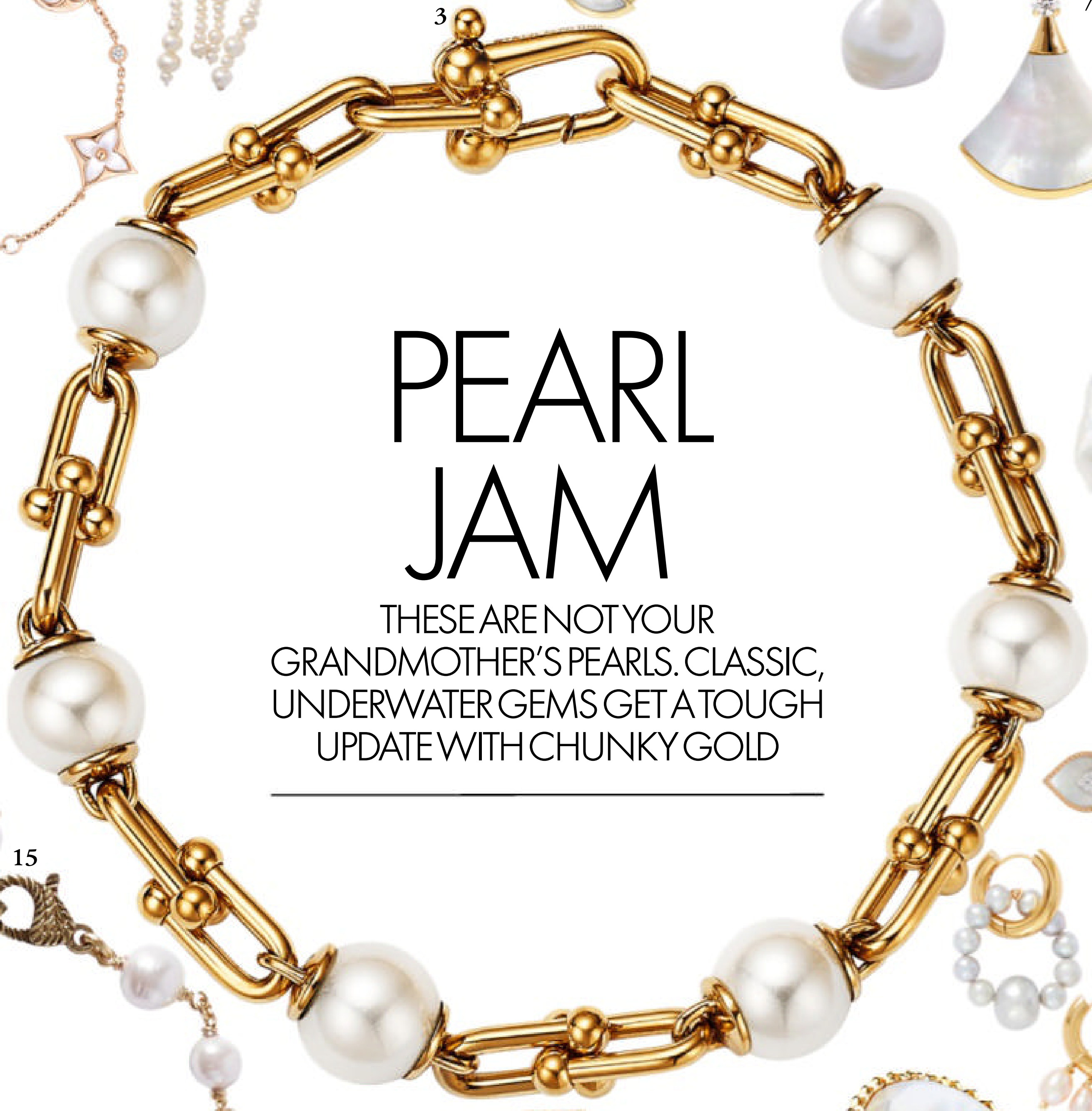

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PEARL JAM

THESE ARE NOT YOUR GRANDMOTHER'S PEARLS. CLASSIC, UNDERWATER GEMS GET A TOUGH UPDATE WITH CHUNKY GOLD

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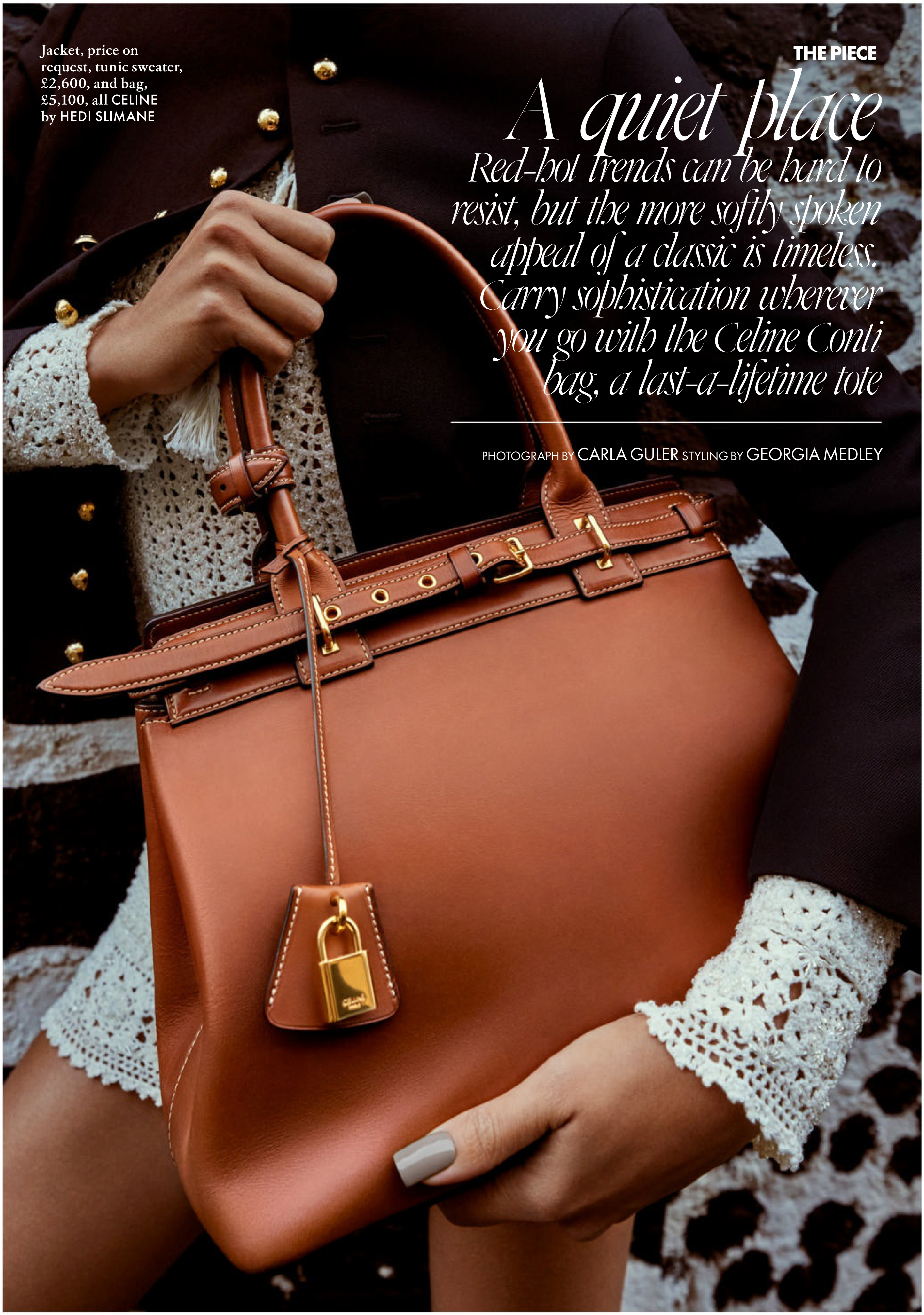
1 Gold, diamond and mother-of-pearl earring, £2,150, **DIOR JOALLERIE** **2** Gold, pearl and cubic zirconia earrings, £495, **COMPLETEDWORKS** **3** Gold and pearl bracelet, £3,525, **TIFFANY & CO** **4** Gold, diamond and mother-of-pearl bracelet, £1,630, **CARTIER** **5** Gold, pearl and diamond single earring, £1,030, **ANISSA KERMICHE** **6** Sterling silver, diamond and pearl bracelet, £190, **PEARL OCTOPUSSY** **7** Gold, diamond and mother-of-pearl earring, price on request, **BULGARI** **8** Pearl earrings, £195, **SIMONE ROCHA at MYTHERESA** **9** Rose gold and mother-of-pearl earrings, £3,050, **ROBERTO COIN** **10** Gold and pearl hoop earrings, £250, **TIMELESS PEARLY** **11** Gold and pearl single earring, £825, **SOPHIE BILLE BRAHE** **12** Gold and mother-of-pearl ring, £6,800, **BOUCHERON** **13** Gold and pearl necklace, £320, **PACHAREE** **14** Gold, pearl and diamond single earring, £730, **DELFINA DELETTREZ** **15** Gold and pearl bracelet, £375, **GUCCI** **16** Silver and pearl earrings, £350, **ALIGHIERI** **17** Pink gold, diamond and mother-of-pearl bracelet, £5,100, **LOUIS VUITTON**



Jacket, price on request, tunic sweater, £2,600, and bag, £5,100, all CELINE by HEDI SLIMANE

THE PIECE

A quiet place

Red-hot trends can be hard to resist, but the more softly spoken appeal of a classic is timeless. Carry sophistication wherever you go with the Celine Conti bag, a last-a-lifetime tote

---

PHOTOGRAPH BY CARLA GULER STYLING BY GEORGIA MEDLEY

WORDS: EVE WALKER. MAKE-UP: SOGOL RAZI. NAILS: MADDY AYERS. STYLING ASSISTANT: GAL KLEIN

Walpole

W

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FASHION + READS

ELLE

PEEL OFF THE LAYERS, LIGHTEN THE LOAD AND SPRING FORWARD. THE LATEST COLLECTIONS INVITE YOU TO SHOW UP AND STAND OUT AS THE WOMAN YOU'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO BE. PLUS: WE PROFILE THE NEW VANGUARD OF BRITISH FILM AND TELEVISION TALENT SHAKING UP THE STORYTELLING WE SEE ON SCREEN; AND THE WAVE OF FASHION VOICES RISING UP AND CHALLENGING US TO STOP AND THINK ABOUT WHAT WE WEAR

PHOTOGRAPH: LIZ COLLINS

BEING EMMA

CORRIN

HOW DO YOU GO FROM ANONYMITY TO BEING ONE OF THE UK'S MOST-WATCHED STARS IN THE SPAN OF THREE WHIRLWIND YEARS? *KENYA HUNT* DISCOVERS AN ACTOR UNAFRAID TO CHALLENGE CONVENTION, ON THE SCREEN OR STAGE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY RUTH OSSAI
STYLING BY BEN SCHOFIELD

THIS PAGE Top, price on request, ACNE STUDIOS. Vest, £98, RE/DONE. Underwear, price on request, N21. Socks, £25, WOLFORD. Shoes, £400, GRENSON. Earrings, £5,800, and watch, price on request, both CARTIER. OPPOSITE Top, £3,100, MIU MIU. Earrings, £5,800, and watch, price on request, both CARTIER

EMMA CORRIN HAS LOST THEIR VOICE, a string of WhatsApp messages informs me as I inch my way through gridlocked, transit-strike-induced traffic towards a north-London studio to meet them for our cover shoot. The actor won't be able to speak in order to save their voice for the stage later. They're less than two weeks into what the press have deemed a glorious run as the title character in Neil Barrett's timely adaption of Virginia Woolf's *Orlando,* the literary classic about a man who wakes up as a woman.

When I get to the studio, I find Corrin, smiling and affable, if unwell, tucked away in a dressing room as a hair stylist tousles their shock of cropped blonde hair and a swirl of people (agent, stylist, photographer, assistants, ELLE team, security guards) quietly whirrs.

'That was terrifying. And one of those moments where you think, God, I really wish I went to drama school so that I'd know how to preserve my voice, which I just don't,' Corrin, dressed in a beanie and striped Bode knit, explains several days later from their London flat when they've got some semblance of a voice back. 'I'm still trying to shake this cough,' they say, gingerly. Their dog, Spencer, darts in and out of the room.

'You just realise how much your voice is your tool. I didn't speak. I was on vocal rest for three or four days, and then just hoped for the best in the evening,' they add. Still, they managed to push through.

The voice as tool could be a metaphor for this interview, which takes place in the throes of a social-media-powered age, when oversharing is the norm and celebrity sit-downs are mired in questions about how much to reveal, to whom and when.

Corrin is warm, friendly, hardworking, likeable – and with boundaries. (It's a quality I immediately recognise in myself.) They're an actor who is no longer on the cusp of stardom, but rather in the thick of it, and has had enough time with fame to have mapped out a way to navigate it. But it's Corrin's decision to come out as non-binary in 2021 that most often drives headlines in ways that can be, depending on the media outlet, meaningful or reductive. I get the sense that Corrin is stepping into their power to say only what they choose. One moment, they're posting their explorations with chest-binding on Instagram. Another, they're publicly rejecting the media's attempts to tie them to a single narrative. And there have been more than a few.

When Corrin gave an interview to the BBC in November, they questioned the relevance of gendered awards-show categories. 'It's difficult for me at the moment trying to justify in my head being non-binary and being nominated in female categories. When it comes to categories, do we need to make it specific as to whether you're being nominated for a female role or a male role?' The soundbite became the headline, which travelled across the *Daily Mail*, ITV, CNN and more. Corrin bristled. '…if you are interviewing me about my work and the subject of gender comes up, please respect and represent the integrity of my answer in the context of the interview as a whole,' they wrote in a caption on Instagram. 'What I mean is, do not sensationalise an answer for the sake of a clickbait headline when it is really a subject that, to be a headline, requires proper enquiry and should be represented with more nuance.'

This incident makes me think of the author and academic Audre Lorde's words: 'If I didn't define myself for myself, I would be crunched into other people's fantasies for me and eaten alive.' And while Lorde was speaking to her own experience as a 'Black lesbian mother in an interracial marriage' in the 1960s, the message resonates just as much now when considering the ways in which public figures from marginalised backgrounds (women, people of colour, queer, trans, non-binary, disabled or the intersection of many of those things) navigate sharing the fullness of who they are.

Corrin describes the experience of making *Orlando* as an opportunity to tell the kind of story they wished were more commonplace. 'Michael Grandage, the director, spoke a lot about how it was on the syllabus when he was at school. And I would love it if it was back on our school syllabuses. I think it's such a brilliant book that teaches you so much about identity and love – all these fundamental questions that we ask ourselves,' they explain. They say the stage adaptation is 'very much a celebration of theatre as well as a celebration of queer joy and love and all of these other things'.

'I'D LOVE TO GET BETTER AT CARVING OUT SPACE AND TIME FOR MYSELF'

Before they were famous, Corrin lived in Kent, the child of Chris and Juliette Corrin, a businessman and speech therapist. They developed an interest in acting while at boarding school in Surrey, eventually studying drama at the Univeristy of Bristol and later St John's College, Cambridge. 'Theatre is where I started,' they say. In a way, their time in *Orlando* feels like a homecoming.

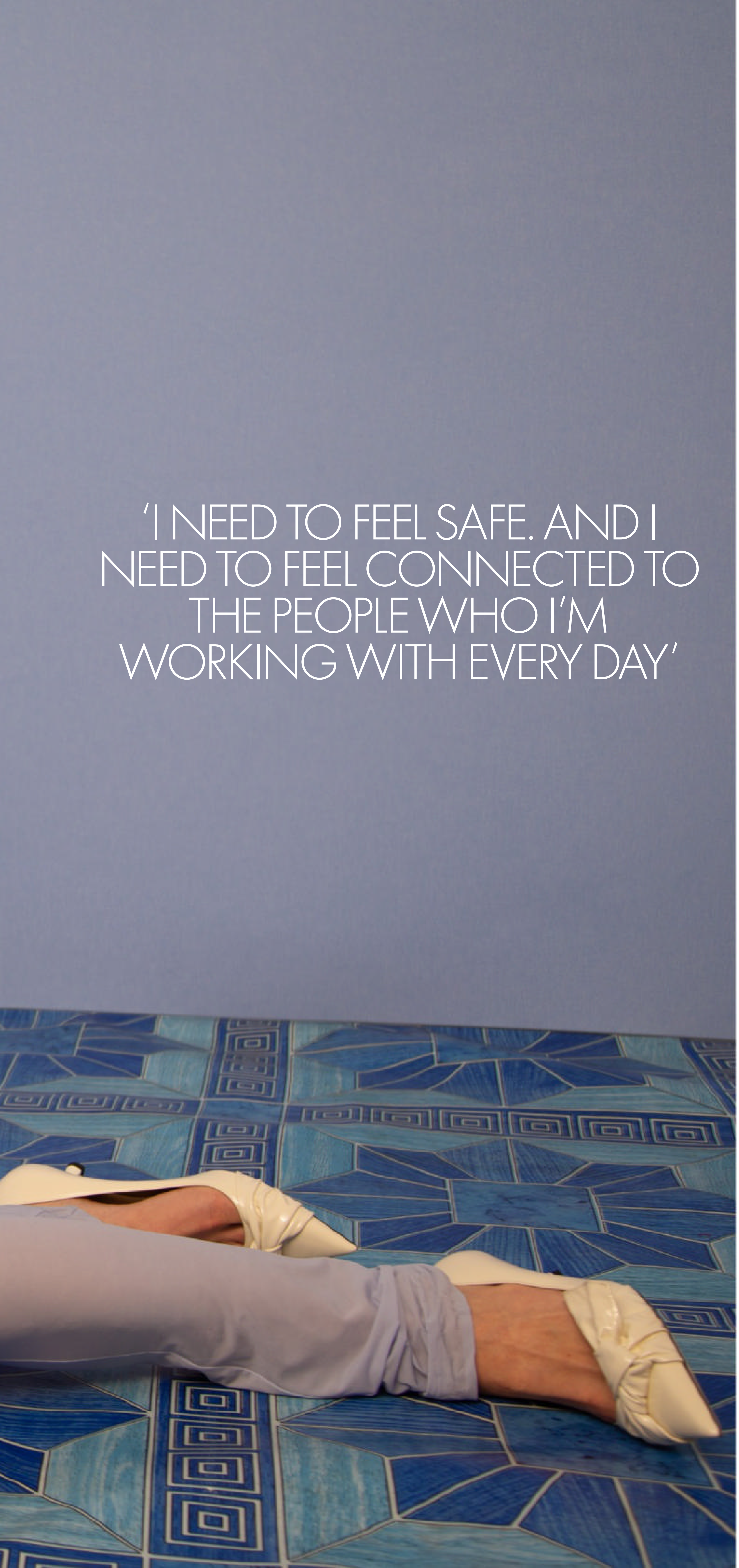
Corrin credits the people in their life – a tight-knit circle of longstanding friends and newish, but loyal, work collaborators – with helping them make sense of this new chapter. 'I think the people in these experiences really make it. It doesn't matter how brilliant the writing is, it doesn't matter how brilliant the director is. If you don't have each other, if you don't have a sense of community, it can be hard. You really feel supported by people, like they have each other's backs. And that's a beautiful thing,' they say. There's Corrin's longtime agent, Maya Hambro. 'I was her first client at her old agency, and we've grown up together. We're like sisters. You really feel like you're rising with people. And I think when you have that connection, with projects and roles and stuff, there's like an invisible dialogue. It's a deep sense of knowing each other, which is really helpful.'

Corrin's career exploded when they portrayed Princess Diana in the enormously successful Netflix drama, *The Crown*, a role that earned them a Golden Globe award and Emmy nomination. Corrin then took on a series of critically acclaimed parts spanning buzzy, period pieces on screen and stage, such as *My Policeman*, *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and *Orlando*. A close friendship with stylist Harry Lambert, who helped craft a cool, audacious, intelligent look for Corrin, sealed the actor's status as a beloved red-carpet standout and fashion rebel (with Cartier and Miu Miu contracts ▹

Shirt, jacket, skirt and tie, all price on request, DILARA. Earrings, £5,800, CARTIER

Bodysuit, £720, and trousers, £1,140, both ALAÏA. Shoes, £725, JIMMY CHOO. Earrings, £5,800, and ring, £5,150, both CARTIER

HAIR by Daniel Martin. MAKE-UP by Gina Kane at Caren, using Chanel Spring-Summer 2023 and No 1 de Chanel. NAILS by Sabrina Gayle at Arch the Agency



‘I NEED TO FEEL SAFE. AND I NEED TO FEEL CONNECTED TO THE PEOPLE WHO I’M WORKING WITH EVERY DAY’

to prove it) – a tabloid obsession and one of Britain’s most bankable new stars.

‘Harry and I go way back – we’re really good friends. Everything that we collaborate on is always very authentically me because he knows me. He’s always wanting to advocate for young British designers, which we have a lot of fun with,’ they say. Corrin has been wearing a lot of Stefan Cooke and SS Daley lately and describes the designer Harris Reed as a close friend. ‘Wearing people who are homegrown, there’s a real power in that.’

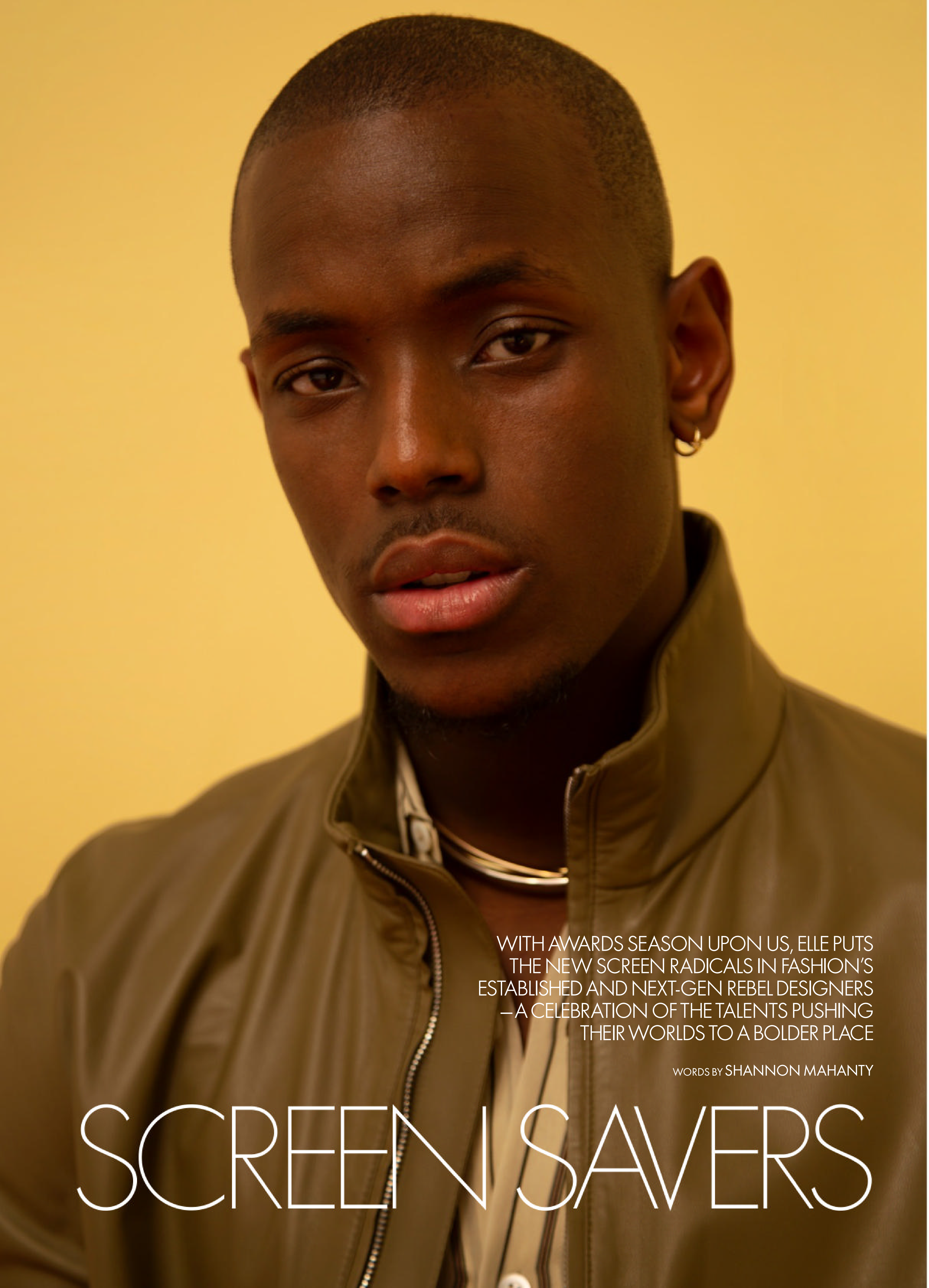
During our chat, Corrin describes a recurring attraction to work and people that provide a sense of security and equilibrium. ‘I need to feel safe. And I need to feel connected to the people who I’m talking to or working with every day.’ Corrin met Grandage while filming *My Policeman*. ‘We have a wonderful friendship. So the rehearsal process was brilliant.’ Meanwhile, they’ve lived with the same three flatmates for five years, in a building right next-door to their best friend, Avigail Tlalim.

While in lockdown, Corrin wrote a screenplay with Tlalim that is now in development. ‘It’s very sweet. We see each other all the time,’ Corrin says of their relationship with their friends. ‘It’s the most grounding thing. It’s all very wholesome. We even had a Pukka advent calendar where we got a teabag every day. Everyone who walked into the flat said, “That’s so on-brand for you guys.”’

As they ease into a new year, Corrin has been thinking about how to create more time for the relationships that matter most, and we commiserate about how pressured our workdays can feel, post-Covid. ‘It’s my New Year’s resolution to be more in touch with my two brothers because we’re all quite bad at communicating. I just don’t see them. It’s been seven months,’ they say, after admitting that they only had two days off from work during the Christmas holiday.

‘I’d love to get better at carving out space and time for myself. Even just yesterday, I didn’t have shoots or meetings and stuff. I took my dog for a really long walk, for like an hour and a half. It was like, “Wow, I haven’t done this.”’

‘Lady Chatterley’s Lover’ is currently streaming on Netflix. ‘Orlando’ runs at the Garrick until 25 February. Corrin will also star in ‘The Retreat’ later this year. ▷



WITH AWARDS SEASON UPON US, ELLE PUTS THE NEW SCREEN RADICALS IN FASHION'S ESTABLISHED AND NEXT-GEN REBEL DESIGNERS —A CELEBRATION OF THE TALENTS PUSHING THEIR WORLDS TO A BOLDER PLACE

WORDS BY SHANNON MAHANTY

SCREEN SAVERS

THE NEW ROMANTIC: MICHEAL WARD

'SHE'S NAAAUGHTY!' MICHEAL WARD grins knowingly and leans back into his seat. He's talking about Olivia Colman, his co-star in the Oscar-tipped *Empire of Light*. In the film, they play workers at a Brighton cinema who form an unlikely relationship. While promoting it, Colman and Ward appeared on *The Late Late Show with James Corden*, where she shared a story about a costume malfunction that led to her 'pissing all down the back of my skirt'. 'Please tell me that wasn't when…' Ward responded. 'That was when I straddled you,' she quipped. 'She has such a playful sense of humour,' Ward says now. 'She really is *naughty*.'

Ward was drawn to the film for several reasons. Of course, there was the opportunity to star in a Sam Mendes-directed blockbuster opposite Colman – but he had other motives, too. 'You very rarely get to see someone who is Black represented in a way that just exudes love,' he says. Stephen, played by Ward, is the victim of repeated racist abuse in the film, set in the 1980s. Meanwhile, Colman's character Hilary suffers from complicated mental-health issues. They are gulfs apart in age, race and lived experience, but their shifting relationship proves beautiful and transformative for both parties. Ward is captivating: funny and deeply empathetic, while also conveying the trauma of being a young Black man in Thatcherite Britain with painstaking vulnerability.

Having made a name for himself (and won an EE Rising Star Bafta Award) in Netflix's Drake-backed *Top Boy*, his first lead film role was in *Blue Story* in 2019. Both centre around violent London gangs, and while they humanise their characters and expose the systemic ▷

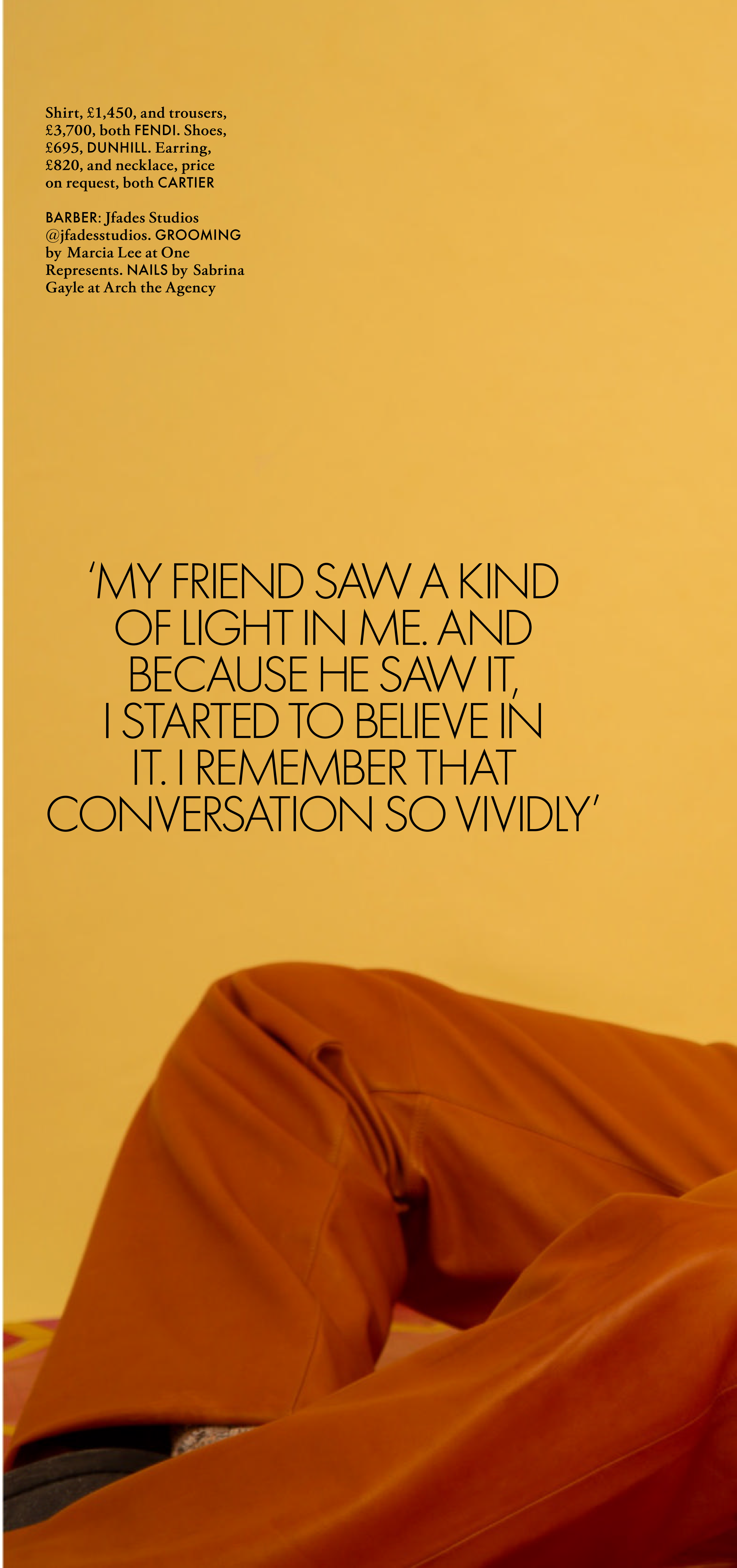
THIS PAGE Vest, around £325, and shorts, about £360, both ERNEST W BAKER. Jacket, £1,165, WALES BONNER. Shoes, £495, JW ANDERSON. Bracelet, £7,350, and earring, £820, both CARTIER. Socks, stylist's own. OPPOSITE Shirt, £410, and trousers, £550, both DRIES VAN NOTEN. Jacket, £3,095, and shoes, £695, both DUNHILL. Earring, £820, and ring, £4,250, both CARTIER issues that force young men into criminal underworlds, 'It's important for my fans to know that you don't have to be someone that does those things,' he says.

Now 25, Ward grew up in Hackney with his mum and three sisters (his father died in a car crash when he was two), before moving to Romford. He developed a taste for acting at school after realising academic subjects weren't for him. 'I can't learn by sitting down! I liked PE and I liked drama. I didn't enjoy anything else so I went for it,' he says. 'There was nobody around me who wanted to be an actor. When I went to [Epping Forest] College to study performing arts, I was the only Black guy on my course. I'd be learning ballet and my friends would watch through the window, laughing.'

Ward recalls being 15 and telling two friends he wanted to perform. One of them promised to be the first member of Ward's fan club when he made it big. 'He kind of saw this light in me. And because he saw it, I started to believe in it. I remember that conversation so vividly.' After college, he landed an agent and started getting parts in music videos. He had loved the original 2011 series of *Top Boy* so much that, when he heard rumours it was being rebooted by Netflix, he DM'd its lead Ashley Walters on Instagram to beg for a role. As it turned out, Walters never saw the message, but Ward managed to get an audition for a small part. The casting director was so impressed he was invited back to audition as Jamie, one of the show's leading characters.

It marked the start of a meteoric rise. In 2020, Ward caught the attention of Steve McQueen, who cast the actor in his BBC series *Small Axe*. Set between 1969 and 1982, the cinematic anthology brought the experiences of London's West Indian community to the screen. Ward played the lead in *Lover's Rock*, a love story that unfolds over the course of one evening, widely considered the standout episode of the series. 'We had so much fun on set, and that was translated into the final thing. I'd wanted to do a "pain story" but I realised I was a part of something that was so beautiful.'

The experience taught him a lot. 'I used to go for every part I came across for a young Black guy. Now I get to be strategic about the stories I get to tell: I'm excited to see what *that* future holds.' ▷



Shirt, £1,450, and trousers, £3,700, both FENDI. Shoes, £695, DUNHILL. Earring, £820, and necklace, price on request, both CARTIER

BARBER: Jfades Studios @jfadesstudios. GROOMING by Marcia Lee at One Represents. NAILS by Sabrina Gayle at Arch the Agency

'MY FRIEND SAW A KIND OF LIGHT IN ME. AND BECAUSE HE SAW IT, I STARTED TO BELIEVE IN IT. I REMEMBER THAT CONVERSATION SO VIVIDLY'

THE CULT CLASSIC:
ANYA CHALOTRA

FROM A YOUNG AGE, ANYA CHALOTRA realised that performing was a way that she could 'change the moods of my family members'. Like any kid who stumbles on a foolproof way to influence their parents, she kept doing it, attending Guildhall School of Music and Drama school when she was 19. As a British-Indian youth, Bollywood influenced her, too: 'I watched a lot of it growing up. I think that was a way for my dad to show me his culture.'

After graduating, she picked up parts in TV shows *The ABC Murders* and *Wanderlust*, but when she landed a leading role in the Netflix show *The Witcher*, she felt radically underprepared. 'She was someone that was outside of myself that I initially couldn't reach,' says Chalotra of her character, Yennefer.

It's a big, gruelling part: a struggling young woman with a curved spine and facial paralysis, who discovers she has magic powers. Not only does Yennefer hold the show, she faces a huge physical transformation.

'Three weeks in, I called my mentor [actor Niamh Cusack] and said, "I can't do this, can you help me?" I'm dyslexic and I found working with cameras difficult. I was so used to being free from that on stage.' Cusack advised Chalotra to 'forget about everything and play the moment' and something shifted. 'I learned to trust my instincts,' she says.

The Witcher became an instant hit. Watched by 76 million households, it was at the time Netflix's most-viewed first season of television. Now, with two seasons under her belt, Chalotra is revelling in her newfound confidence. 'I learned to feel comfortable with being uncomfortable. Acting changed the way I saw myself.'

Top, price on request, coat, £1,695, and skirt, £495, all 16ARLINGTON. Heels, £625, MANOLO BLAHNIK. Socks, £10, FALKE. Necklace and watch, both price on request, CARTIER

FOR ANYA CHALOTRA AND ROSY MCEWEN: HAIR BY NARAD KUTOWAROO AT CAROL HAYES MANAGEMENT. MAKE-UP BY JOEY CHOYAT PREMIER HAIR AND MAKE-UP. MANICURE BY SABRINA GAYLE AT ARCH THE AGENCY

Jacket, £1,835, skirt, £1,310, and sandals, £775, all FERRAGAMO. Earrings, £2,830, and ring, £1,140, both CARTIER. Socks, £10, FALKE

THE INDIE DARLING:
ROSY McEWEN

AFTER MAKING WAVES IN THEATRE WITH turns in *Timon of Athens* and *Tamburlaine* with the Royal Shakespeare Company, and last year playing Desdemona in the National Theatre's *Othello*, 27-year-old Rosy McEwen landed her first lead role in *Blue Jean* – the story of a closeted PE teacher navigating queer life in 1980s Britain. So poignant was the performance that she beat Bill Nighy, Cosmo Jarvis and Sally Hawkins to win Best Lead Performance at the BIFAs last year. 'I felt like I'd been thrown into cold water!' she says. 'I was so surprised – I'm so new here.'

She may be a breakout star, but McEwan's portrayal of a woman desperately trying to hide her sexuality is powerful and heartbreaking. 'We want to see someone who's human,' she says, 'and the thing about Jean is that she's an antihero, but she's an antihero because she's been forced to be that way because of the society she's living in.'

Director Georgia Oakley collaborated with several women who lived under the Conservative government's punitive Section-28 laws. 'There's something about telling a real story that resonated with me in a way that I didn't expect,' says McEwen. 'That's how you really get inside people's psyche and really change things.' ▷

THE PEOPLE'S PRINCE:
JONAH HAUER-KING

JONAH HAUER-KING'S BIG BREAK CAME in the form of a school play about a crooked detective, written by his friend, which they took to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. 'I loved it,' he reminisces. 'Initially, it was less about the acting and more about being part of something. Everyday you're flyering, you're promoting; you become really bonded to people through theatre and creativity.' One night, an agent happened to be watching. She met Hauer-King afterwards and signed him on the spot.

It's a fitting fairy tale for a man who would go on to take a handful of film and TV roles before landing the big one: a role in the live-action remake of beloved Disney classic, *The Little Mermaid*, out this spring. In one of the year's most highly anticipated releases, Hauer- King plays Prince Eric to Halle Bailey's Ariel. 'I really look up to her,' he says of his co-star and close friend. 'Neither of us have done anything like it before. She came from a bit more of a music background. I came from acting, but neither of us have done anything on this scale.'

Jacket and shirt, both price on request, LOUIS VUITTON. Trousers, £800, HERMĒS. Trainers, £295, AMI. Earring, £820, and ring, £980, both CARTIER

FOR JONAH HAUER-KING: GROOMING BY NADIA ALTINBAS. MANICURE BY SABRINA GAYLE AT ARCH THE AGENCY. FOR DAFNE KEEN: HAIR BY NARAD KUTOWAROO AT CAROL HAYES MANAGEMENT. MAKE-UP BY JOEY CHOY AT PREMIER HAIR AND MAKE-UP. MANICURE BY SABRINA GAYLE AT ARCH THE AGENCY

THE COMING-OF-AGE QUEEN:

DAFNE KEEN

'JANE BIRKIN, NINETIES FRENCH "IT" GIRLS, circus performers and men in show business…' 18-year-old actor Dafne Keen isn't reeling off a list of dream roles, but the figures who influence the way she gets dressed. 'I have a very personal style,' she explains. 'I thrift a lot. I buy second-hand pieces and fix them up so they fit me better.'

Costume is a gateway into character for the British-Spanish actor, who has been performing since her first role in the BBC series *The Refugees* when she was nine. Her big break came in *Logan*, where she played the adopted daughter of Hugh Jackman's Wolverine.

With Hollywood conquered, this year Keen enters the *Star Wars* universe with *The Acolyte* TV series, premiering this summer. Starring alongside Amandla Stenberg ('She was so welcoming') and Jodie Turner-Smith, she's tight-lipped about the plot, but promises 'it will really make people think'.

It's not the first time she's taken on a franchise with a cult following. In 2019, she began a three-season run as Lyra Belacqua in the much-anticipated BBC/HBO adaptation of Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials*. She was nominated for a Welsh Bafta for her performance, in which she starred alongside Ruth Wilson and James McAvoy. 'I learned so much,' she says of the pair. 'They're both extremely talented, but always try new things on set – that's so refreshing.' ▷

Jacket, price on request, and trousers, £664, STEFAN COOKE. Shoes, £480, WANDLER. Earrings, £11,200, CARTIER

THE SCREEN STEALER:
DARYL McCORMACK

'IT WAS LIKE A HALF DAY AT SCHOOL – you know, the days where you're allowed to come in wearing your own clothes, and it's nice outside and you get an ice-cream.' Daryl McCormack, 30, is describing the fun of working with Emma Thompson for his starring role in last year's *Good Luck to You, Leo Grande*, the film that scored him a coveted EE Rising Star nomination at the Baftas. In it, he plays a young male sex worker who is booked by Thompson's Nancy, a middle-aged widow who has never had an orgasm. The result is an honest, at times heartbreaking journey of intimacy and sexual awakening.

McCormack was born in Tipperary, Ireland, to an Irish mother; his African-American father is from Baltimore. Having mostly grown up as the only male in a household with his mother, grandma and sister, McCormack took on the role of entertainer from a young age. 'That was my first stage in a way,' he says. 'Performing has always been the backbone of who I am.'

He studied drama in Dublin before moving to Hackney, east London, in 2017. Starting out in the West End, he began to pick up small screen roles before being cast as violent gangster Isaiah Jesus in *Peaky Blinders*. With a rare combination of striking talent, sensitivity, charisma – and grown-up boy-band good looks – McCormack's profile has been steadily rising ever since. But the last year has been a standout one for the actor.

His ascent is set to continue. This year, he will play a young author in *The Tutor*, alongside Richard E Grant, and front *The Woman in the Wall* with Ruth Wilson. Then there are the whispers that McCormack will be the next Bond…

Although his most treasured takeaway from his career so far remains his friendship with Thompson ('She's an amazing friend, but also like a guardian or something'), the Bafta nod is the icing on the cake. Previous winners have seen their careers explode post-awards. McCormack is still in disbelief. 'I don't really know how to take it in,' he says. 'I moved to London five years ago from Ireland and started waiting tables. To be nominated feels like a crazy moment.' □

THIS PAGE Jacket, £2,450, shirt, £475, and trousers, £1,180, all GUCCI. Shoes, £305, GRENSON. Earring (sold as pair), £5,800, and watch, £4,050, both CARTIER. OPPOSITE Polo-shirt, £4,550, HERMÈS. Trousers (just seen), £850, FENDI. Earring, as before, necklace, £7,300, and watch, price on request, all CARTIER

SET DESIGN by Ruth Ossai Studios. STYLIST'S ASSISTANTS: Gal Klein and Poppy Norton

FOR DARYL McCORMACK: GROOMING BY NADIA ALTINBAS. MANICURE BY SABRINA GAYLE AT ARCH THE AGENCY.

BACK TO BLACK

THE PERENNIALLY STYLISH SHADE HAS RETURNED TO THE LIMELIGHT IN THE SHAPE OF KNIFE-SHARP BLAZERS AND DEVASTATINGLY CLEAN SLIPS – ALL WITH A FREE-SPIRITED TWIST. SPRING DRESSING COULDN'T BE SIMPLER

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LIZ COLLINS STYLING BY ANNE-MARIE CURTIS

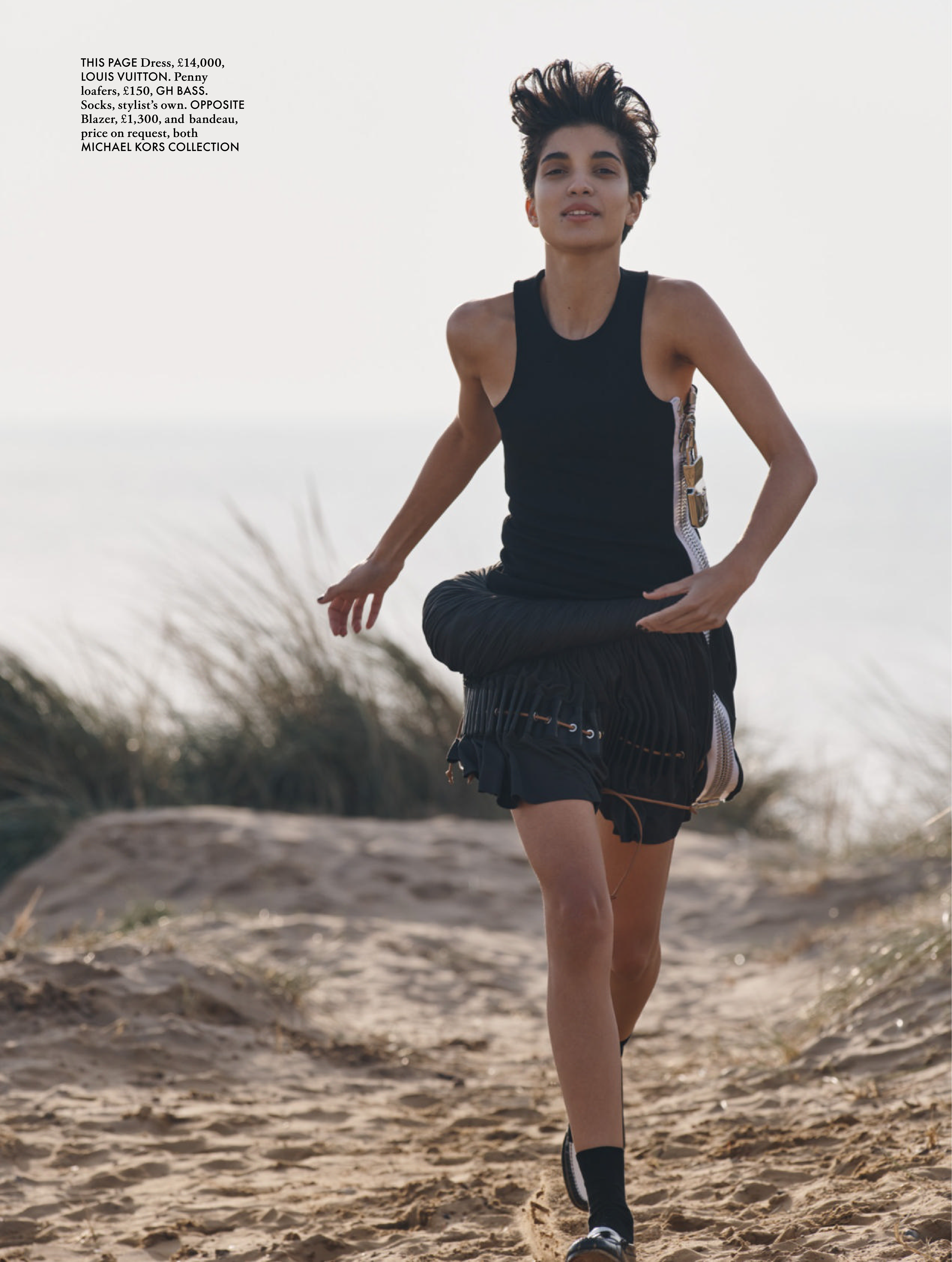
Jacket, £1,900, and dress, £700, both ISABEL MARANT. Boots, £1,830, CHANEL

THIS PAGE Jacket dress, price on request, and boots, £1,830, both **CHANEL**. **OPPOSITE** Crop top, £925, **DOLCE & GABBANA**. Vest, £195, **RE/DONE**

Dress, £4,500, and jacket, £4,850, both CELINE BY HEDI SLIMANE. Flats, £360, CAREL. Socks, £17 for two pairs, HĒDOÏNE

THIS PAGE Jacket, £2,608, vest, £742, and leggings, £829, all CHLOË. Penny loafers, £150, GH BASS. OPPOSITE Jacket, £2,250, crop top, £925, and skirt, £1,350, all DOLCE & GABBANA. Vest, £195, RE/DONE

THIS PAGE Dress, £14,000, LOUIS VUITTON. Penny loafers, £150, GH BASS. Socks, stylist's own. OPPOSITE Blazer, £1,300, and bandeau, price on request, both MICHAEL KORS COLLECTION



THIS PAGE Dress, £14,000, **LOUIS VUITTON**. Penny loafers, £150, **GH BASS**. **OPPOSITE** Shirt, £715, and trousers, £1,180, both **GUCCI**. Penny loafers, as before. **HAIR:** Simone Mason. **MAKE-UP:** Sharon Dowsett at Agency of Substance. **MODEL:** Santana at Premier Model Management. **FASHION EDITOR:** Charlotte Deffe (ELLE International). **FASHION PRODUCER:** Yannick Selva (ELLE International). **STYLIST'S ASSISTANT:** Crystalle Cox. With thanks to Zoe Wassal at Great Southern Productions (greatsouthernproductions.com), and the Gallivant Hotel (thegallivant.co.uk)

ONE OF A KIND

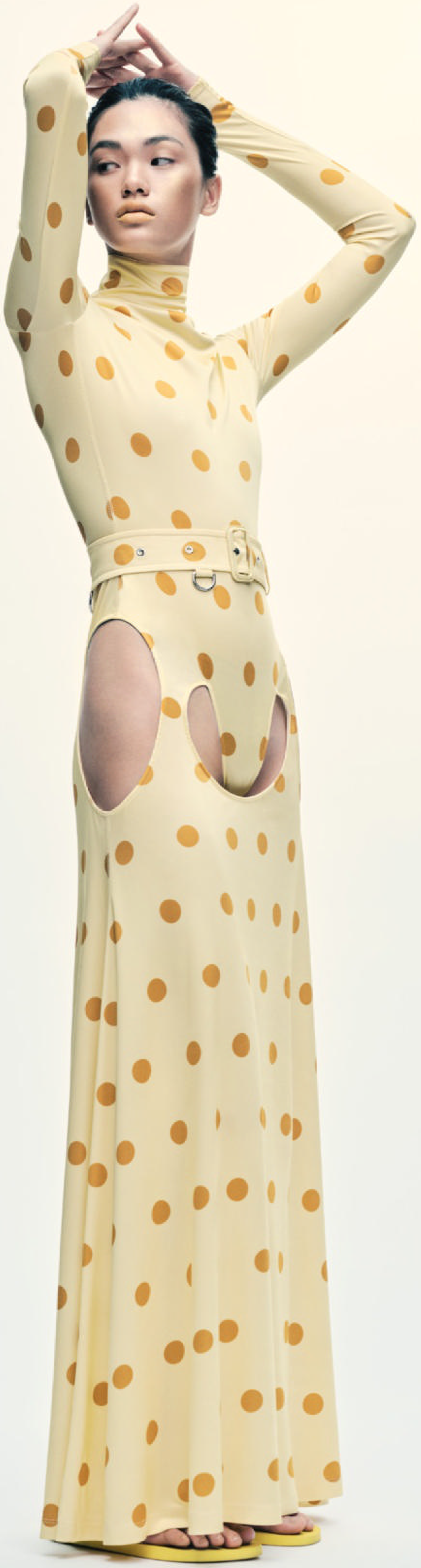
THE MESSAGE IS CLEAR: SPRING 2023 IS ALL ABOUT STANDING OUT. BE THE MAIN CHARACTER IN LOOKS THAT ARE AS INDIVIDUAL AS YOU

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NATHANIEL GOLDBERG STYLING BY ALEX WHITE

All prices throughout, on request. Top, skirt and heels, all LOEWE

THIS PAGE Dress and necklace, both **DIOR.**
OPPOSITE Jacket, dress, trousers and platforms, all **FENDI**

THIS PAGE Cape and trousers, both **GIORGIO ARMANI.** **OPPOSITE** Dress and briefs, both **PRADA**



THIS PAGE Belted dress and sandals, both **BURBERRY. OPPOSITE** Bodysuit, trousers and belt, all **MICHAEL KORS COLLECTION. HAIR:** Stéphane Lancien using L'Oréal Paris. **MAKE-UP:** Tom Pecheux using Yves Saint Laurent Beauté. **NAILS:** Christina Conrad using Kure Bazaar. **MODELS:** Maty Drazek at Focus; Mammina Aker at Select; Yoni Tjin-A-Koeng at A Models Amsterdam; Ayla Murray at Viva; Qun Ye at Next; Dohyun Kim at IMG; and Taira Go at Ford. **PRODUCTION:** Louis2 Paris

HOW TO TALK ABOUT FASHION NOW

WILDLY POPULAR TIKTOK COMMENTARY. VIRAL YOUTUBE EXPLAINERS. BUZZY INVITE-ONLY NEWSLETTERS. THE WAY WE DISCUSS WHAT WE WEAR AND WHY IS EVOLVING THANKS TO A WAVE OF NEW VOICES. *LAUREN COCHRANE* MEETS THE NEXT-GEN CRITICS SHAKING UP FASHION

RIAN PHIN'S TIKTOK VIDEOS ARE ABOUT FASHION – BUT THERE are few of the styling tips, hacks or hauls that usually dominate the category. Instead, watch her videos and you might learn something new. One reveals how the Y2K revival 'signals authenticity' in our modern era, a further focuses on status as it relates to style and another is something even less typical of an average fashion creator: a reading list.

Phin, whose social-media handle is @thatadult, is one of a new generation of voices giving fashion criticism a software update. There's also, to name a few, @thekimbino, an Instagram account run by Kim Russell that looks at catwalk nostalgia through an archival lens; Odunayo Ojo's Fashion Roadman on YouTube, which offers fashion history and analysis to newcomers and insiders alike; @oldloserinbrooklyn on TikTok, a trend-forecaster account run by Mandy Lee; and Alexandra Hildreth's commentary under the account @guyfieri.superfan, also on TikTok.

Moving on from the age-old notion of the fashion critic as a front-row insider reviewing catwalk shows for a small audience of other fashion experts, this new cohort is more likely to give their thoughts from their bedrooms – but with significant reach. Ojo's YouTube channel has nearly 100k subscribers. The Kimbino has 158k followers on Instagram, including Julia Fox, Precious Lee and Jourdan Dunn. Lee's @oldloserinbrooklyn, meanwhile, has an audience of 430k on TikTok and such influence that a video about indie sleaze she posted in October 2021 sparked last year's much-discussed revival.

They work across different platforms, but the internet is what unites them. Phin, who is based in New York, describes herself as 'chronically online'. 'It helps to have a broad conversation, which is more inclusive of different voices,' she explains. Russell says Instagram has allowed her to join the conversation from Perth in Australia – one of the most isolated cities on earth. 'I can now put myself on the same pedestal as some of the biggest heavyweights in fashion and that's happening all the way from here,' she says. 'How else would I have that sort of world stage?'

'EVERY GENERATION SPEAKS TO THE WORLD IT'S LIVING IN'

Notably, many of these creators are people of colour and/or come from working-class backgrounds. This means what they do has reach beyond the typical industry audience of other insiders. Caroline Rush, the CEO of the British Fashion Council who oversees London Fashion Week, has noticed this shift over the last decade. 'The rise of digital and the influence of social media has changed the way we view and discuss collections,' she says. 'What we have seen is the emergence of a younger online audience with an interest in fashion and educational content, eager to get involved.'

Ojo, who studies fashion journalism at Central Saint Martins, started @FashionRoadman in 2015 because he was reading about fashion in old issues of style magazines but didn't see anything similar on YouTube. He now hopes his channel is helpful. 'People are interested in fashion, but they don't really know where to start,' he says. 'What I try to do in my videos is to not assume knowledge.' He says his designer profiles – where he tells the story of, say, Rei Kawakubo or Alessandro Michele – are among his most popular, suggesting viewers use his videos to learn fashion history.

Russell, a former primary-school teacher who first started posting about fashion online on the now-defunct site Polyvore, is aware that she is representing a demographic that has previously been shut out of fashion – and that motivates her. 'I don't look like the typical fashion person. I'm not able to get on a five-hour flight to New York or Paris,' she says. Russell explains that the distance from the fashion capitals means that 'everything is slower and harder. I've quit many times, but it's too late for that now,' she says referring to her large, engaged audience that tunes into every post she makes.

Ojo says his drive to open doors comes down to details. 'Even if I'm explaining something very simple, I simplify it even more. I still have to say, "Oh, yeah, by the way, Demna is the designer at Balenciaga," before I even talk about anything that he's done.' Lee, meanwhile, is mindful of others like her 'who didn't grow up with money' and this influences her point of view. 'It's important to me to not gatekeep,' she says. 'It's not to gain points, to virtue signal or anything like that. The fashion industry likes to keep lower-income people out of the picture, and that's bullshit. I don't agree with that.'

There's no doubt that fashion discourse – like fashion itself – has long been judged an elite sport, with top jobs often going to those with connections. In his book *Fashion Climbing*, the late Bill Cunningham relayed stories about going to shows in the Sixties where the 'press ladies, especially the magazine girls, made fabulous calculated entrances, with their wardrobes planned out for three or four changes a day'. Those in this ▷

PHOTOGRAPH: GETTY IMAGES

milieu were paid peanuts, he revealed, but that didn't matter because they were often independently wealthy.

Iain R Webb, Professor of Fashion & Design at Kingston School of Art, wrote criticism for *The Sunday Times* and *The Observer* from the late Seventies – and was ELLE's Fashion Director in the late Nineties. He came from a fairly humble background but joined an exclusive club. He has memories of shows in Versailles and the Forbidden City in Beijing and – in one incredible 24 hours – attending Madonna's *Blonde Ambition* tour followed by Gianni Versace's first couture show. He says that, in the pre-internet days, the critic was the eyes and ears of the fashion industry. 'You'd have a review of a whole week of shows [in *The Times*] and that would be all you would read about it until six months later, when it might be in magazines.'

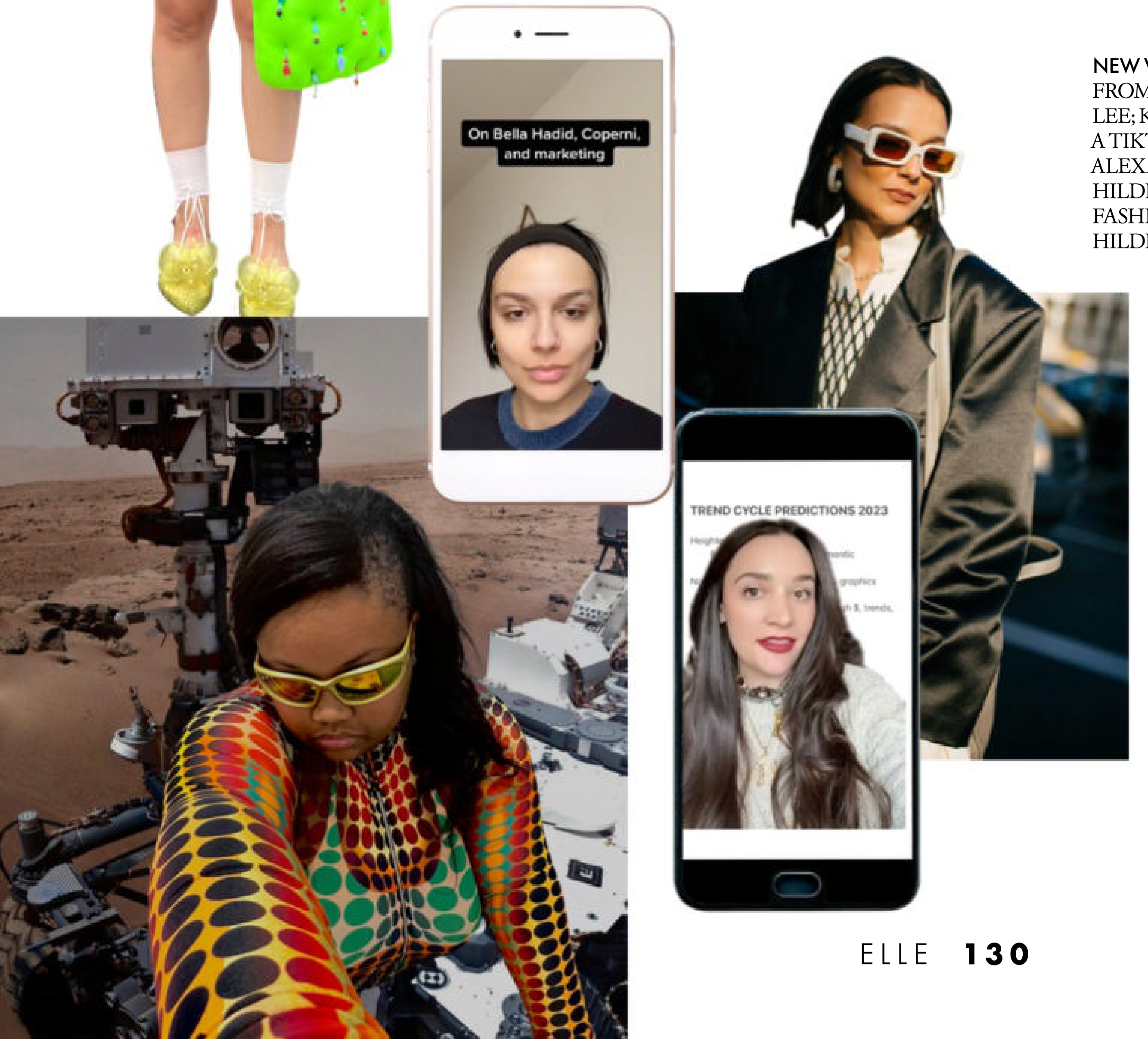
Without the internet, only a chosen few had a voice, as the only place to read about fashion was the limited number of publications that chose to write about it. This led to a small, close-knit cadre of critics reporting on shows, largely to interpret what we would all be wearing next season. Even if designers such as Jean-Paul Gaultier and Alexander McQueen created fantastical shows, they would be judged as an artistic take rather than what we would now see as a viral moment designed to create shareable buzz around a brand.

This model was challenged when digital hit in the early Noughties. As fashion bloggers' profiles grew along with their follower counts, they began attending shows – to the chagrin of established fashion editors and critics. Tamu McPherson was one of this generation. Her blog, *All the Pretty Birds*, began in 2008. She remembers others being 'wary' of her and her fellow bloggers when she started going to fashion weeks. 'At first, there was definitely curiosity,' she says. 'Especially because we did not come up the ranks as many [editors] did.' McPherson 'paid her dues' and moved from the fourth row to the front row as bloggers morphed into influencers, and – alongside journalists and stylists – became paid-up members of the fashion establishment.

Vanessa Friedman, the storied fashion critic at *The New York Times*, says it's important not to overstate these moments. 'We should be careful about not getting too overwrought about what we see as big shifts,' she says. Instead, she views them as part of a gentle evolution. 'Journalism is not a static practice. It's constantly changing. And it may seem more dramatic now, but it probably seemed equally dramatic 40 years ago. Every generation speaks to the world it's living in.'

Despite their position as the new guard, these creators respect their elders. All reference established critics like Friedman, *The Business of Fashion*'s Tim Blanks, *Another Magazine*'s

> 'TIKTOK'S NOT GOING TO BE AROUND FOREVER. YOU HAVE TO PIVOT'


On Bella Hadid, Coperni, and marketing
TREND CYCLE PREDICTIONS 2023

NEW VOICES
FROM LEFT: MANDY LEE; KIM RUSSELL; A TIKTOK POST BY ALEXANDRA HILDRETH; LEE'S FASHION PREDICTIONS; HILDRETH

Issey Miyake produced pieces and sustainability

BIG CONVERSATIONS
A STILL FROM ODUNAYO OJO'S YOUTUBE CHANNEL; RIAN PHIN'S SOCIAL-MEDIA POSTS ANALYSE STYLE TRENDS

PHOTOGRAPHS: GETTY IMAGES, SHUTTERSTOCK

Alex Fury, *The Guardian*'s Jess Cartner-Morley and the American edition of *Harper's Bazaar*'s Rachel Tashjian, who also writes the influential invite-only newsletter, Opulent Tips. 'I hope to see myself as a contributor [to the fashion ecosystem] but I'd never want traditional fashion criticism to go,' says Phin. 'I would never want people to not have access to [critics] like Tim Blanks.' It's also clear that names writing for more traditional media still have power, even in online culture. After the Coperni show in September, where Bella Hadid was spraypainted into her dress, Tashjian wrote an article lamenting gimmicks on the runway. The story generated headlines for days after.

Tashjian describes criticism as 'the trendiest way to engage with fashion at the moment'. Her own take chimes with other voices but provides a slightly different focus. 'I'm 33 years old. I ask a lot of the same questions someone who's primarily doing commentary on TikTok or Instagram or Twitter asks,' she says. 'There are people on social media who maybe make [fashion] more accessible… I'm trying to show that there's so much going on, and [it's] so intellectually rewarding, and delightful, rigorous, fun and challenging to unpack it and think about it.'

The changes in how we view fashion come in cycles. Tashjian draws a comparison with the 2010s, when 'people were on Tumblr and Blogspot, discussing fashion collections in great depth'. The focus on inclusivity, meanwhile, mirrors Webb's approach in the Eighties. 'I always wrote for the reader, not the person sat next to me at the show,' he says. 'I referenced popular culture, which gives people a way in even if they're not into fashion.' His new exhibition, *The Fashion Show: Everything but the Clothes*, opens at V&A Dundee this summer, collecting ephemera from shows over the years. It's likely to reinforce another generation of critics' thinking in similar ways.

There are signs that the wider fashion industry is accepting and making room for these new voices, as it did for the bloggers before them. Oyo is now meeting with brands such as Gucci; Phin and Hildreth write for publications including *Paper*; while Lee has become a full-time trend forecaster. Through her work online, meanwhile, Russell has attracted the attention of high-profile names – including Bella Hadid and Kim Kardashian, whom she has advised about historical collections such as those by Alexander McQueen. 'As my page grew, my experiences became better because I connected with these amazing industry people who weren't gatekeeping,' she says. 'I can't imagine where I would be without having found my online community.'

SPEAKING OUT
PHIN'S TIKTOK VIDEOS EXPLAIN BIG IDEAS WITHIN FASHION

'IT'S REWARDING, DELIGHTFUL AND CHALLENGING TO UNPACK AND THINK ABOUT FASHION'

When digital culture is most effective, it's about that community. These critics and creators aren't sitting on high – they are, more often, representatives of something bigger. Ojo gives the example of his Discord, a social-media platform, which has 2,200 members. 'People are obsessed with the Antwerp Six [the influential Belgian group of designers including Dries Van Noten, Ann Demeulemeester and Walter Van Beirendonck],' he says. 'So when I interview Walter, I interview him from the perspective of what those people want to know.'

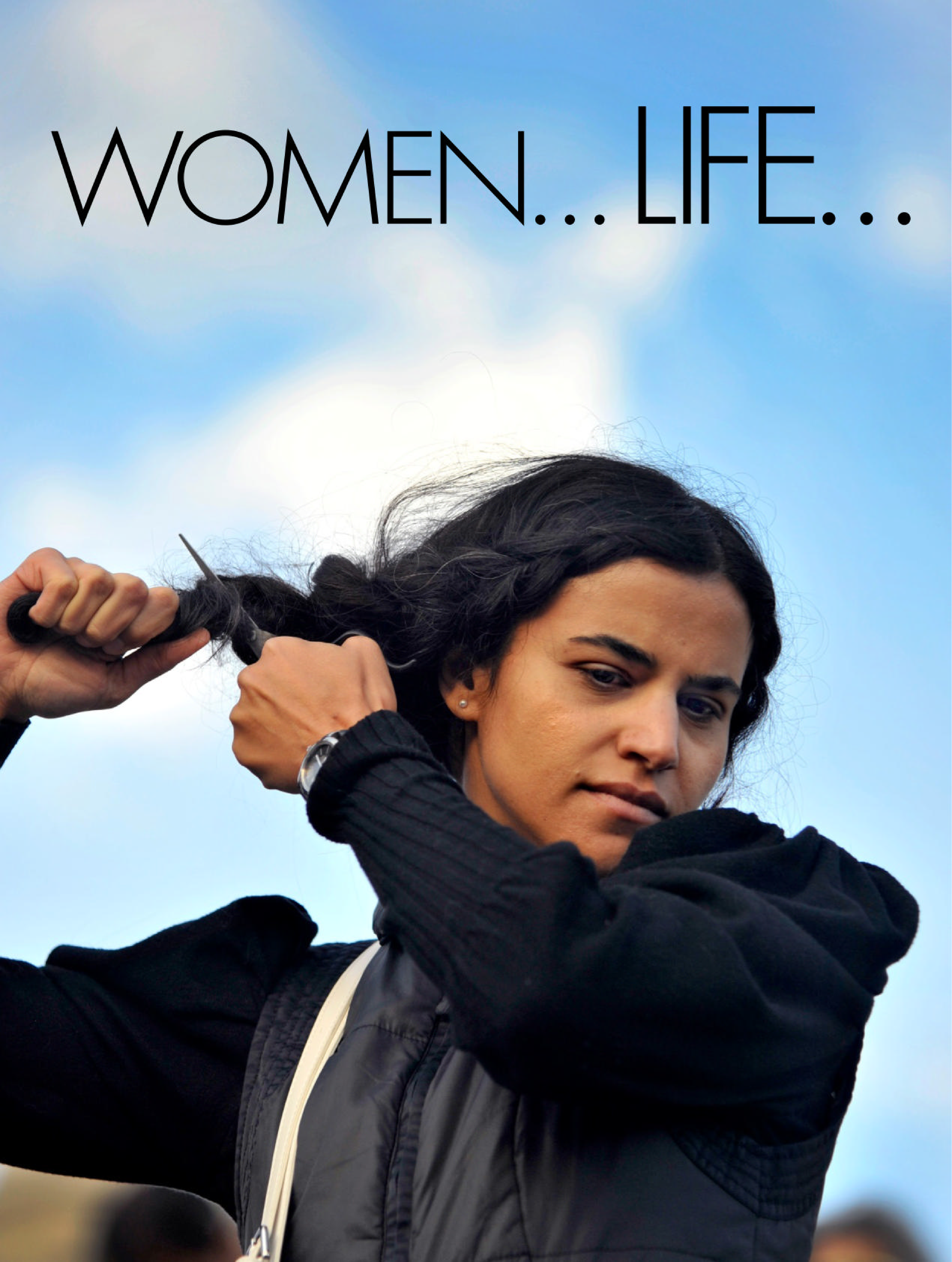
A generation that has grown up online is also used to a wealth of information at a click. McPherson is particularly taken with the knowledge-is-power element of this content. 'For Gen Z, who are trying to learn about fashion, I think it's great and responsible for accounts to provide education,' she says. 'And if you have a fashion brand that does something culturally insensitive, then these new critics should absolutely talk about it in a constructive way.'

Lee argues that these two factors – community and the quest for knowledge – are working on twin tracks, and they will influence how fashion criticism and analysis develops further. 'I feel like there aren't that many really good in-depth fashion podcasts,' she says. 'And I've seen so many new Substacks pop up. TikTok's not going to be around forever. You have to pivot and figure out where to go next.' Russell has a different way of moving forward: diversifying. 'I want to be a fashion editor, stylist, creative director, critic,' she says. 'I want to do it all and I know I can. That starts with me.'

And, thanks to the ever-diversifying landscape of media platforms and disrupted hierarchies, it is possible to do it all. In 2023, the average fashion fan might get their news from a TikTok video, a newspaper critic's review or an Instagram post. All have the chance to go viral. Going forward, Tashjian sees the beginnings of a more inclusive and varied conversation around fashion.

'One thing I really like is that people share my writing and other writers and other people on social media will say, "I don't agree with this, but I thought it was really interesting." That is such a significant change,' she says. 'I hope that, in the next year, there is more consideration of other points of view or accepting that there are multiple ways to look at things.' ☐

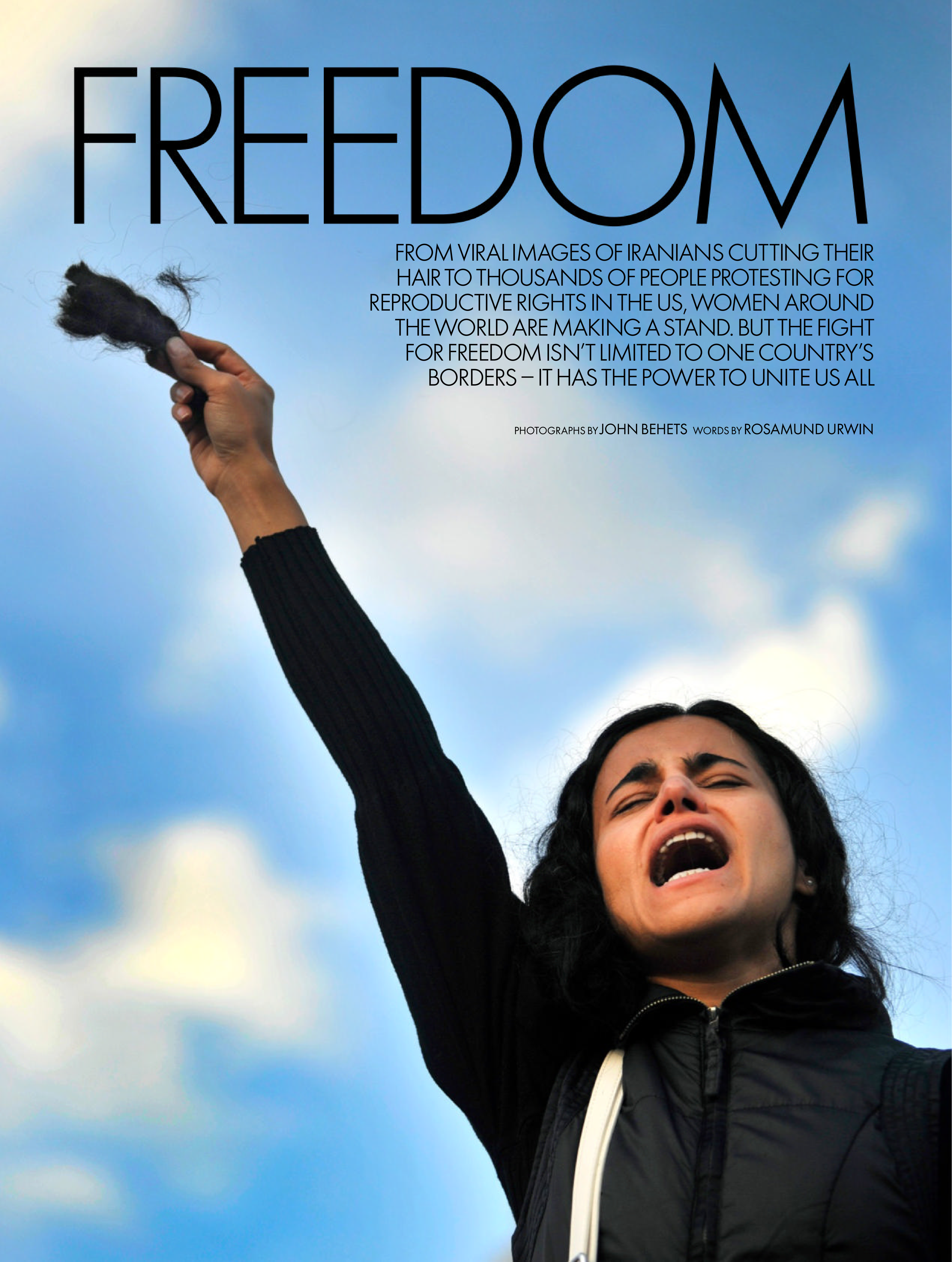
WOMEN… LIFE…



FREEDOM

FROM VIRAL IMAGES OF IRANIANS CUTTING THEIR HAIR TO THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE PROTESTING FOR REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS IN THE US, WOMEN AROUND THE WORLD ARE MAKING A STAND. BUT THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM ISN'T LIMITED TO ONE COUNTRY'S BORDERS – IT HAS THE POWER TO UNITE US ALL

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN BEHETS WORDS BY ROSAMUND URWIN



> 'THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN AROUND THE WORLD ARE INTERCONNECTED'

FOR BOTH EMILY PATERSON AND SHOHREH Bayat, there came a clear moment when they realised they had to speak out. Half the world away from each other and many months apart, they had the same epiphany: 'If not me, then who?' Paterson, 45, an American who describes herself as a 'suburban soccer mom', was arrested while protesting for abortion rights at the Supreme Court in Washington DC in November, while Bayat, an Iranian chess referee, was in China at a tournament in 2020 when, facing harassment from the Iranian regime from afar, she realised she could no longer keep her hair covered with a hijab. It foreshadowed what was to follow in her home country.

'It was then I knew I had to take a stand,' Bayat recalls. 'I didn't want to show a fake image anymore. I was tired of being used by the regime, of being a poster girl for them; they wanted me to present an image of a religious Muslim woman and I wasn't.' Paterson's act of civil disobedience, meanwhile, which came ahead of last year's mid-term elections, was intended to remind voters that 'abortion rights were on the ballot'. She says: 'I thought that I would be a hypocrite if I didn't do it, because my value system is firmly based in the idea that when we see injustice, we have to act.'

Like Paterson and Bayat, women across the globe have become ever more emboldened to speak out, to protest and even to risk their lives in the face of oppression. This has come in response to a rolling back of women's freedoms in several countries, which has reverberated around the world through viral images of frontline protests and Tweets or TikToks containing news of such atrocities you cannot forget seeing them. Indeed, it has been a long period of cognitive shocks when it comes to women's rights – from the restricted access to abortion in America, to the extraordinary bravery of Iranian women risking their lives – that has reminded us that they want only what we take for granted, while the extreme misogyny of the Taliban has shown how women's hard-won freedoms can be so swiftly taken away.

The catalysts are complex and varied. In some countries, religious extremists have sought to reassert traditional gender roles, while conflict elsewhere has encroached on women's rights. Then there has been the rise of a new breed of 'strongmen' leaders who have drawn from an authoritarian playbook by attacking women, from the former US President Donald Trump, who is considered a hero of the anti-abortion movement, to Turkey's Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who in 2021 withdrew his country from the Istanbul Convention (a treaty designed to fight violence against women), sparking protests from human-rights groups.

In countries like the UK where the threat is less stark, women have felt a sense of global sisterhood with those whose rights have been repealed. In his famous letter from jail in 1963, Martin Luther King stated the importance of solidarity: 'Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.' Social media has helped women to organise and to build that sense of solidarity, both within countries and beyond their borders. Bayat says that Iranian women, for example, have been inspired by Afghan protesters: 'There are many strong and brave women who have stood up against the Taliban, and I think this is all connected. We inspire each other and learn from each other.'

Afghanistan is perhaps the most egregious example of the annulment of women's rights. Since the Taliban retook control in 2021, they have introduced laws limiting women's ability to work, forced them to dress conservatively and closed schools and universities to girls; yet there are brave feminist activists, such as Kabul-based Monesa Mubarez, who have kept fighting for what they once had. Mubarez, 31, has said: 'One war ended, but the battle to find a rightful place for Afghan women has started… We will raise our voice against every injustice until the last breath.'

The war in Ukraine has also seen women's resistance become headline news. Since the invasion last February, Russian soldiers have used sexual violence as a weapon of war. Yet Ukrainian women have been at the forefront of the nation's war efforts, with the first lady Olena Zelenska saying at the start of the conflict that 'our current resistance has a particularly female face'. One example is Kseniya Draganyuk, 26, who founded the initiative Zemlyachki to help women on the front line stay well-equipped, and to spread their stories on social media. 'We are a strong nation, and our women are really strong too,' she says. 'Freedom means life to us, so we will never give up… Imagine that Putin broke into your house, and you need to protect your children; that is how we feel.'

In the US, women have been galvanised to fight for reproductive rights after the Supreme Court overturned Roe v Wade, the 1973 legislation that made access to abortion a federal right in America. This enabled states to set their own policies, and abortion procedures in most circumstances are now banned in 13 of them. The uproar against the ruling was swift, with demonstrators taking to the streets, holding placards with slogans such as 'My body, my choice' and, when they protested outside politicians' homes: 'Don't like me at your house? Get out of my uterus'.

Then in September, the death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini in Iran sparked widespread protests against the country's authoritarian rule. The movement's rallying cry has been: 'Women. Life. Freedom'. Amini died from suspected brain damage caused during her detainment by the morality police. She was believed to have been arrested for wearing her headscarf in an 'improper' manner. Many campaigners in Iran have since paid the ultimate price for their courage, with those killed including teenage girls such

PREVIOUS SPREAD: ROKHSAREH MOHAMMADKHANI, PICTURED AT THE FIRST WORLDWIDE PROTEST AFTER MAHSA AMINI'S DEATH IN SEPTEMBER 2022 IN TRAFALGAR SQUARE, LONDON

as Nika Shakarami, who was just 16 when she disappeared at a protest in Tehran, and mothers such as 62-year-old Minoo Majidi, who was shot by security forces.

Bayat's experiences after removing her hijab at the chess tournament two years earlier were a harbinger of what was to come for Iranian women. 'Now I must be a voice for the Iranian people,' she says. 'We all shared the common pain that Mahsa felt. So many women have been harassed by the morality police… People [in the West] don't necessarily understand that hijab is not our culture. Iranian women have the same values as modern women all around the world, but they are stuck in a system where they cannot express themselves.'

In Iran, it has been a long battle for greater freedoms. Women won the right to vote in 1963 as part of the White Revolution, and expanded divorce and custody rights followed. But since the Islamic Revolution of 1979 their rights have been restricted and a public dress code has been imposed. Iranian women are desperate to taste real freedom again.

It is a freedom we cannot take for granted. The conflict in Ukraine illustrates how women's rights come under assault in periods of turmoil – war being the most extreme form – but also shows how women fight back. 'There are 30,000 women who enjoyed civil life before the war, and they didn't know about military life: they were a barista, a journalist, maybe a teacher,' says Draganyuk, 26. 'But they joined the Ukrainian armed forces to defend their homes, their children and their lives against Russian aggression. The conditions are very difficult – some have to sleep on the ground, they don't have a shower – but this is the price of freedom.'

The US presents a different danger: that even in one of the most established democracies in the world, women's rights are not inalienable and can be stripped back. 'We have to be vigilant, because what happened with Roe v Wade was very gradual, and I did get nervous about what that could herald for us in the UK,' says Mandu Reid, the leader of the Women's Equality Party, which campaigns for feminist objectives. 'You had a very patient campaign by the anti-choice [campaigners] in the US, and those of us who are pro-choice fell into a kind of complacency trap.'

For Paterson, this 'trap', and recognising her own privilege, were the reasons she knew she had to 'step outside [her] comfort zone'. A mother of two sons, she runs her own business and lives in the suburbs of Washington DC. 'I'm an upper-middle-class white woman, and I felt I had the means to do this protest,' she says. 'Even though I knew I would be arrested, I wouldn't be fired from my job… The Trump years forced me to do a lot of soul-searching around my privilege. I've never really had to fight for democracy – it has been stable for me as a white woman. For other groups in our country, it's never been stable, it's never been equitable.'

Paterson paid the price for her peaceful protest inside the Supreme Court, where the decision to repeal Roe v Wade was made. She was locked up for 30 hours in a cell with metal bunk beds and no mattress, and transported in boiling-hot vehicles that she said were like coffins. 'We were given very little food and water, and the conditions were deplorable,' she recalls. 'In the US, if people kept their dog in these conditions, they would be arrested, yet here we were in our nation's capital.'

While women's rights may not be so under siege in the UK, there are still battles being fought. The murder of Sarah Everard in March 2021 by an off-duty police officer, Wayne Couzens, brought a sharp focus on campaigns to end violence against women, but also led to a wider debate about institutional misogyny. 'Police forces have been under scrutiny for years, but mostly from the point of view of racism, rather than sexism,' says Reid. 'This has been a moment of reckoning for women's relationship with the police. What we've seen is that misogyny travels alongside racism in these institutions. It's not a few bad apples – it's a culture. This is women saying that we won't put up with the status quo.'

British women also took to the streets in October over unaffordable childcare, a sign that people who may not have considered themselves politically minded are engaging. Joeli Brearley, 45, the founder and chief executive of the campaign group Pregnant Then Screwed, who organised the March of the Mummies, says that 62% of women who attended had never been to a protest before. 'People are absolutely livid,' Brearley says. 'We've been through a pandemic where it was really apparent that pregnant women and mothers were sidelined in government policy, so it has crystallised that we [parents with young children] are just being completely missed out in these conversations. Now we're heading into a cost-of-living crisis, which will predominantly affect women, against a backdrop of the childcare sector collapsing.'

That anger is felt more broadly by women across the world: a Gallup poll in December found a gender-fury gap, with women becoming increasingly unhappy over the past decade. Though much of that rage may be about respondents' own lives, it can also be a motivating force to ask what we can do for women in other countries in worse situations. Reid argues that we mustn't feel powerless. 'Iranian and Afghan women are not waiting for us in the West to save them, but they want us to stop saving their oppressors,' she says. 'We want our elected officials to take a more robust stance, to say we won't tolerate the kind of atrocities we're seeing. We can amplify women's voices on the ground, but also put pressure on our government to put pressure on the regime that is oppressing them. That is what solidarity looks like.' The rights of the women of the world are interconnected. If last year's wave of protests has shown us anything, it's that we can't relax until all women enjoy freedom. It's asking ourselves, 'If not us, then who?'□

'A GALLUP POLL IN DECEMBER FOUND A GENDER-FURY PAY GAP'

THE MAGIC TOUCH

WHETHER CASTING SPELLS ON PUTIN OR SHARING POTIONS ON WITCHTOK, MODERN WICCANS ARE ON THE RISE. *LAURA PITCHER* GRABS HER TAROT CARDS AND LIFTS THE VEIL ON HOW PAGANISM HAS BECOME THE BREAKOUT RELIGION OF THE DECADE

EVERY MONTH AT MAMA MOON HQ IN east London, people of all age groups, from teens to octogenerians, gather for what its owner Semra Haksever describes as 'a kind of coven'. To attend, you need to bring an aromatic mix of ingredients: 'Cinnamon, dried basil, cloves, a bay leaf, essential oils, a flower, hot charcoal, a handful of soil, and a dish to burn some paper in.' It might seem niche, but she says this is a way for women who crave spirituality in their lives to 'dip their toe' into the world of paganism by connecting with the moon's energy and casting a simple spell. Haksever self-identifies as an eclectic witch, meaning she doesn't follow a single tradition and instead incorporates different cultures and practices into her witchcraft. 'It's a very inviting and accessible space for everybody,' she says, describing it in terms of a new wellness trend. 'Witchcraft is a contemporary way for women who want to be empowered to connect with some kind of energy.'

Haksever's casual coven meet-ups are among a wave happening in the UK, from the east-London shop She's Lost Control to the Bermondsey arts space Ugly Duck and Brighton's sprawling Coven of the Horse and Moon. And it's all set against a backdrop of New Age witches trending online and beyond. From the billions of views on TikTok's Witchtok community – where you can break money curses through chants or learn how to charge your crystals – to last year's *Hocus Pocus* revival starring Sarah Jessica Parker and Bette Midler, it seems that Wiccans are everywhere right now. In the 2021 Census for England and Wales, 74,000 people referred to themselves as Pagans (up from 57,000 in 2011), while 13,000 people listed their religion as Wicca. In UK publishing, 'witch fiction' is taking over book lists with several releases this year, including the big Harper Collins debut *Weyward* by Emilia Hart ▷

PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN SWEERS/TRUNK ARCHIVE

and the second instalment of Juno Dawson's bestselling *Her Majesty's Royal Coven* series.

When they're not discussing spells online, modern witches are joining forces to hex Putin every Saturday night, chanting, 'You are cursed, you are bound'. Before that, thousands of witches across the US rose up against the Trump administration, using the hashtag #WitchTheVote for a 'collective intersectional effort to direct our magic towards electing candidates who will push our country and our planet forward' into a 'witch utopia'.

The practice of witchcraft or magic has been deeply rooted in many cultures and communities throughout history. Witches – real or imagined – were subject to persecution by the Christian church in Europe, leading to waves of witch-hunts, peaking in the 17th century, and mass executions on the basis of accusations and the merest suspicion of participating in pagan religions. Many spiritual practices in Africa were also denounced as witchcraft and heathenism during colonisation. Because of this, the current mainstream infatuation with witchcraft feels significant to a wide range of marginalised groups. For Haksever, it is about embracing your intuition. 'Women and queer people generally are the ones who walk through the world with one eye over their shoulder,' she says.

Lexx Miller, an Austin, Texas-based rootworker (someone who practises Hoodoo, the folk magic of the American South), says that spirituality seems to trend 'during revolutionary times', whether it's the New Age movement of the Seventies or today's digital era. Despite modern technological advances, she says resources are 'still so limited' because of who has access to publishing. 'Some of the best sources are elders and family members, but I think with the rise of WitchTok, we can start to support more marginalised spiritualists who can teach people about their own cultures and practices,' she says. Miller also wants to remind people that witches 'aren't a monolith', noting instead that all witches practise differently according to their ancestry and personal beliefs. 'It could be your grandmother making a herbal bath to heal your ailments or a friend who carries a rabbit foot for good luck.'

Porsche Little, a full-time diviner (or spiritual worker) based in Los Angeles, is a devotee of the Lukumí and Ifá faiths. 'I was marked a child of Orisha Obatala [a spirit central to the creation story in the Yoruba mythology of West Africa], making me an Aborisha [devotee] of the tradition,' she says. A Black American with ancestors from Benin, Little is just one of the many diviners who have embraced ancient religions of the African diaspora as a means of liberation. 'It's important that Black people find reparations outside of – and alongside – the money that is owed to them,' she says. 'Our names, our original traditions, our magical tools and the awareness of our destinies... Fortunately for us, traditional African religions can bring you all four.'

Since she was young, Little remembers having a deep connection to the astral plane, a place believed by some to be where a person's soul goes between dying and entering the spirit world. 'The veil has always been very thin for me; I've experienced intense dreams and so many moments that didn't make sense for years,' she says. Little's mother, who is also spiritual, was the first person to teach her about spirit guides (ancestors who pass on knowledge and help people on their spiritual journeys). 'She told me, "If you close your eyes and ask for your guide's name, they will answer." "Charlie," I replied.' Fifteen years later, Little says, she connected with her great-great-great-grandfather Charlie through astral projection, an intentional out-of-body experience where one is said to travel through the astral plane, and her 'wonder towards the afterlife brightened'.

Little is one of the many people online offering tarot-reading and other mystical services appealing to the growing number of those who describe themselves as spiritual but non-religious. The 2018 British Social Attitudes survey found 52% of respondents described themselves as non-religious, but a fifth of those said they 'definitely or probably' believed in life after death. Little attributes the rise in alternative spirituality that she has witnessed in the past decade to spiritual timing itself – or how astrological influences are affecting younger people. 'For Generation Z, Pluto is found in Sagittarius, a zodiac sign that longs for deeper knowledge, philosophy and higher education,' she says. While this may provide some astrological insight into why Gen Z is drawn to New Age spirituality, the embrace of witchcraft is, for many, also a political act.

Today, being a 'modern witch' can mean anything from sharing potions on TikTok to reclaiming Indigenous spirituality to aligning with the identity of a witch without actually casting spells. 'There is no one or "right" way to be a witch, because you get to define what that means for you,' says 39-year-old Edgar Fabián Frías, an Indigenous Mexican artist and *brujx* (a gender-nonconforming reworking of the Spanish term for witch or sorcerer) who launched Our Sacred Web, their tarot and energy practice, over a decade ago. Frías grew up in a conservative Jehovah's Witness community but was raised by parents who came to the United States from Mexico, where many of their relatives 'offered healings with plants, had superstitions, believed in energies and had other practices that were deemed "witchy".' Frías became more intimately aware of witchcraft through queer and trans communities. They have now officiated at weddings and hosted energy workshops in galleries, museums and at music festivals.

> 'THE POINT HERE IS THE REJECTION OF ORGANISED RELIGION – MANY PEOPLE ASSOCIATE IT WITH RACISM, MISOGYNY AND HOMO-PHOBIA'

When considering that the campaigns to stamp out witchcraft throughout history were also attempts to strip Indigenous people of their culture, halt women's liberation and erase queer identities, today's modern witchcraft revival can be seen as a protest. To align with witchcraft is inherently anti-capitalist – perhaps another reason why WitchTok appeals to Gen Z's political beliefs. 'People are feeling disenfranchised and disappointed with traditional religions, and many have seen the ways that these religions continue to uphold patriarchal, colonialist and white-supremacist ideologies and worldviews,' says Frías. 'The witch points so clearly and directly to the imbalances in power and equity that exist in our world.'

If modern witchcraft showcases a collective longing for life before colonialism and capitalism, it comes as little surprise that today's witches are often in the headlines using their powers to fight against fascism. This, says Diane Purkiss, a professor at the University of Oxford who specialises in women's literature and witchcraft, comes as a huge part of fourth-wave feminism. 'The point here is the rejection of organised religion, because many people under 30 associate it with misogyny, homophobia, negative right-wing politics and racism,' she says. Naturally, this has been met with a backlash. 'People sometimes act as if the witch-persecution era is over, and I wish that were true,' says Purkiss. 'In the 2016 election, Hillary Clinton was widely said to be a witch possessed by a demon.'

In the midst of rising political and gender divides, Purkiss says witchcraft has become increasingly about the embodiment of queer and female power. 'WitchTok has pretty much disposed of the old idea that witches are people who worship Satan,' she says. 'Modern paganism has gone by the board, as people aren't so sold on the idea of tradition anymore – they've reassembled the idea of being a witch from bits and pieces of cultural leftovers, such as tarot cards and astrology.' This ties in with other New Age spiritual practices that have found a home on TikTok and are growing in popularity, including manifestation.

> 'WITCHCRAFT IS A WAY FOR PEOPLE TO FIND A SPIRITUAL TRADITION THAT WILL SUSTAIN RATHER THAN THREATEN THEM'

The recent reclamation of the witch has also brought to light conversations around spiritual and cultural appropriation. While Frías believes that the archetype of the witch 'belongs to all of humanity', there are certain ancestral and traditional practices that are a part of particular lineages and communities. For instance, the practice of ancient religions from the African diaspora should be limited to people of that descent; others are instead invited to learn about their own ancestors and align themselves with those traditions and practices. 'If you hear native folks telling you not to burn white sage, take that as an invitation to discover what kinds of plants or other techniques your ancestors used for smudging, cleansing and opening up sacred spaces,' advises Frías.

Alongside conversations around cultural appropriation, the commodification of witchcraft has also been an ongoing debate in the spiritual community. White crystal vendors have been rightly called out for selling objects related to Indigenous ritual traditions, and brands like Sephora and Urban Outfitters are among those that have faced a backlash for appropriating magic. As interest in witchcraft continues to grow, more people and brands may come to view it (like any other trend) as a money-making opportunity. This can destroy the livelihoods of spiritual workers who rely on these sales, and clashes with the anti-capitalist origins of witchcraft. The Italian-American scholar Silvia Federici has said that the revival of magic is only possible today because it 'no longer represents a social threat'. 'Astrology, too, can be allowed to return, with the certainty that even the most devoted consumer of astral charts will automatically consult the watch before going to work,' she wrote, suggesting the message behind witchcraft has been watered down under capitalism.

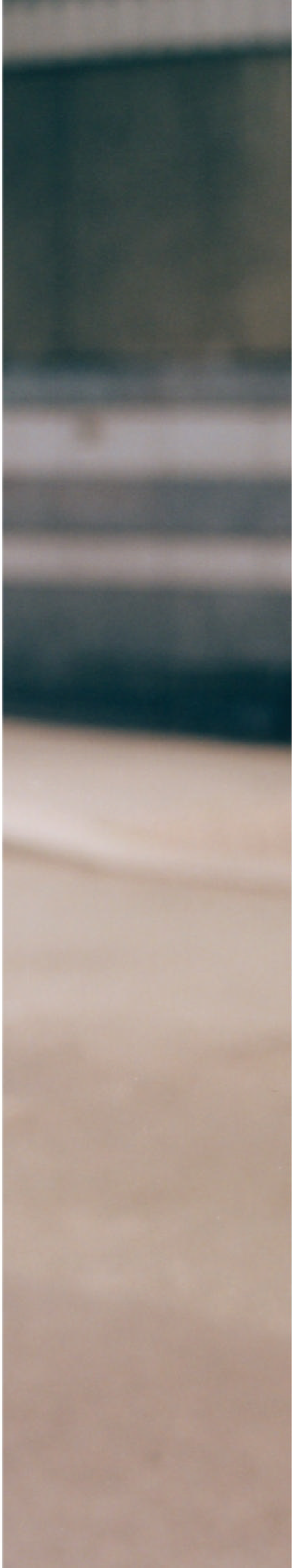
With spiritual creators fighting for views online, many can turn to offering shock-value spells, such as 'how to get your ex back'. This chase for virality is something that Lexx Miller intends to avoid by finding the balance between content creation and sitting at her altar to continue her studies. 'My biggest fear is of becoming someone who experiences success but loses themselves in the process, so enjoying this journey as a humbled student will remain at the foundation of everything that I do,' she says. 'Even though spirituality is about having faith in the intangible, we're also here to have a human experience. Respecting each other's cultures should be at the core of our practice, and the best way to do this is to research everything that you're interested in.'

While it's clear that, today, 'witch' is a broad term encompassing multiple practices and beliefs, the interest in witchcraft points to a moving away from the perceived ills of modern society. This is in line with the anti-work movements that have taken place online over the past couple of years, including 'quiet quitting' and the downfall of 'girlboss' culture. It's also where, Purkiss says, modern witchcraft strikes the right balance for the emerging anti-capitalist, anti-establishment and culturally diverse generation. 'Spirituality is something that ordinary people can access, because we're revolting against traditional religions but we're not necessarily wanting to base our lives on the material world either,' she says. 'Witchcraft is a way for people to find a spiritual tradition that will sustain rather than threaten them.' In other words, modern witchcraft is a means for people today to apply ancient beliefs to contemporary issues. It's about undoing the wrongs of the past and rethinking the world we live in today. □

KEEP CALM?

IN AN AGE OF PERMACRISES, AN ANCIENT GREEK PHILOSOPHY THAT ADVOCATES RESILIENCE AND ACCEPTANCE IS NEWLY FASHIONABLE. BUT ITS RISE IN POPULARITY HAS LED *NATASHA BIRD*, A DEDICATED STOIC SINCE HER TEENAGE YEARS, TO QUESTION HOW WELL ITS PRINCIPLES ACTUALLY SERVE HER OR THE WORLD WE'RE LIVING IN

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK RABADAN



I REMEMBER VIVIDLY THE EVENING MY DAD HAD A STROKE. I was in my university flat in Edinburgh, sitting down to a *Sex and the City* marathon with friends. A nearby cousin drove miles to knock on our door and give me the message in person, expecting me to collapse into her arms. Instead, I listened, packed a bag and walked calmly to her car. She drove me to the airport in silence.

I can picture myself moving through the empty Gatwick corridors after landing in London at an ungodly hour. Bloc Party's song *Biko* playing on repeat in my headphones; the lyrics 'You have crossed the River Styx / and the waves have taken you away' delivering a perfect requiem. Letting some of those waves wash over me too, holding the idea that this could be the moment my dad's already dimming light would be snuffed out.

There we were, confronted with a major stroke after his decade-long battle with cancer; a body that had proven resilient was older now, and fragile. It made sense. And I wanted to sit with the idea, walk around and through it until I knew all its pathways, making peace with it before seeing my family, who would need me to do practical things as we planned for what might come next. ▷

The chorus hit as I walked towards the sliding doors of the hospital, a blurred outline of my mum behind them: 'So toughen up, Biko, toughen up.' And that's exactly what I did.

It feels weird to call myself a Stoic. The word is often and easily misconstrued; its Ancient Greek principles of reason, neutrality and persistent self-control fell out of favour in the Sixties when emotional expression, talking therapy and empathy became the preferred approach to mental health. It might sound like a leaning towards self-flagellation or, worse, martyrdom, but stoicism's original doctrines are all strong, enabling tenets to live by. They include steeling yourself, evaluating and moderating your emotions, keeping an even keel in the face of turbulent times and accepting the inevitability of death. The original Stoics, including Seneca and Epictetus, believed in grieving loved ones while they are still alive, familiarising yourself with the feelings so that they don't later incapacitate you.

While the ancient philosophy's popularity has fluctuated since it was first conceived in the 3rd century BC, stoicism is on the rise, particularly among my age group. Print sales of Seneca's *Letters from a Stoic* shot up by 42% in 2020. And the popular Daily Stoic Instagram account, with its grounding quotes from Cicero and Marcus Aurelius, has a 1.8 million-strong following. 'We've now got two generations of millennials who've grown up without organised religion, without a belief framework. Yet there's still a need to have rules or guidance. And stoicism provides pretty much cradle-to-grave advice about how to handle everything from romantic rejection to our own mortality,' explains Brigid Delaney, author of *Reasons Not to Worry: How to be Stoic in Chaotic Times*. And so we've revived it, co-opting it to suit the current zeitgeist. There's a whole chapter on stoicism as a way of 'fear-hacking' in bestselling self-help author Caroline Foran's recent book *The Confidence Kit*. Meanwhile, tech bros like Tim Ferriss and Ryan Holiday have used it to develop cult followings, delivering stoicism to Silicon Valley as a way to reconcile great wealth and excess with some idea of piety. Anyone can listen to Holiday's 'Stoicism for Modern Life' meditation series on the Calm app, which offers its principles as an alternative to Buddhism to help you 'find peace within the noise of everyday life'.

Having practised stoicism for so long, I hope that people won't cling to it too tightly. I say this from a place of experience with its downsides. But it is easy to see why it has become an anchor to many in this era of pandemonium and catastrophe.

There was, of course, the pandemic. As it raged and we all had to face the idea of losing those precious to us, helpless as we tried to counter a disease we hadn't yet got to know, the need to focus only on the things in our control became important for everyone. Stoicism is, I would argue, one of the surest ways of protecting yourself against big, scary, external phenomena – like pestilence, war and global warming – because it teaches you to be sage about things you can't personally influence. 'The things that we're going through, humans have gone through before, and the Stoics lived in a time not unlike our own. There was a lot of excess, a lot of inequality,' Delaney says. In the past few years, we've all had to live with the discomfort of death and sickness without going to pieces. We've had to find an equilibrium, despite the threat of Putin's arsenal and being at the mercy of a shambolic UK government.

While some have confronted it only recently, intimations of mortality have underpinned most of my life. I first looked death in the face when I was 13. My grandfather was ailing and we raced to his bedside only to be 30 minutes late; just enough time for him to have developed a waxy, pallid complexion, his mouth ajar as if something might have exited that way. Then, when I was 15, my dad discovered he had cancer. The day he found out, he pretended he was fine so my mum could celebrate her 50th birthday. But when the party was over, the return to earth was more brutal than expected, with frequent emergency trips to hospital and invasive surgeries that spanned a decade. During that period, my older sister died suddenly of a grand mal seizure. Her death brought up complicated feelings and a lot of self-reckoning: she and I had had a strained relationship, and it was difficult to reconcile that with her sudden absence.

My dad survived cancer and the stroke, but later went on to have a heart attack on Christmas Eve in 2018, and was in a coma in ICU over New Year. He's still alive today, if you can believe it. His power to rebound is astounding. But my relationship with death is now a familiar one. The door opened in front of me so many times that I've practically had The Reaper round for tea. And my response to it is measured: I know that people die, the world still turns.

Despite how I might personally have fallen into it, stoicism isn't all about enduring trauma or suffering the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. Quite the contrary. The original premise of stoicism was joy. 'The Stoics weren't preaching

> 'THE DOCTRINES OF STEELING YOURSELF, EVALUATING AND MODERATING YOUR EMOTIONS, AND KEEPING AN EVEN KEEL ARE ALL STRONG, ENABLING TENETS'

repression – they wanted you to enjoy yourself,' explains Delaney. 'They wanted you to have a big, happy, fruitful, contributing life and not suffer too much with the anxiety of imagining the worst or stressing about what people think.' In many ways, modern stoicism is the antidote to 'snowflake' culture: it teaches you to be resilient, to not be triggered too easily, to take inconvenience in your stride, to find beauty and pleasure in small moments and to maximise the time you have with the people you cherish.

For me, this rings true. I am, at my core, an unwavering optimist. Bracing myself to get through something isn't merely a test of endurance – it is because I have a strong sense of the light at the end of the tunnel; that this too shall pass, and when it does, there are better, more wonderful, unmissable things on the horizon. When it comes to my dad's illness, I have been able to picture at least the freedom my mum might have, when she's no longer nursing him. During perinatal depression, I focused on the fullness of the experience that was to come when my son was born. Balancing out the worry and pain with the steadfast knowledge that there will also be joy is what gives me stability. Leaning on stoicism to work out what is in my control in order to make a plan, or distract myself with a good book if I decide there's nothing I can do about it, is a tactic that any good CBT therapist might advise.

And yet, just as stoicism has become the philosophy that everyone is talking about, I can't help noticing more and more of its pitfalls. Composure in moments of emotional distress makes my decision-making sharp, but it doesn't always make me relatable. We've spent decades telling people that it's healthier to open up about their feelings, to share their worries and seek support from their family, friends and even Instagram followers. So while I'm being quietly practical as my nearest and dearest hug and weep, I can seem unfeeling. Some question whether I really care. In those moments, even though stoicism teaches you not to pay mind to how others see you, I'm aware that an emotional display would bring comfort to the people I love.

Stoicism also rocks the bonds of my relationship with my husband. As Delaney puts it, there is an 'anti-vulnerability' aspect to its practices. Having evolved from being primarily matches of status and convenience, modern marriages are about connection, partnership, love, appreciation and commonality. Being vulnerable is absolutely key. My stoicism can be a brick wall between us. It messes with the vows we made because, while I'm certainly capable of getting 'through thick and thin', it doesn't always feel to him as if we're doing it together or that it's bringing us closer.

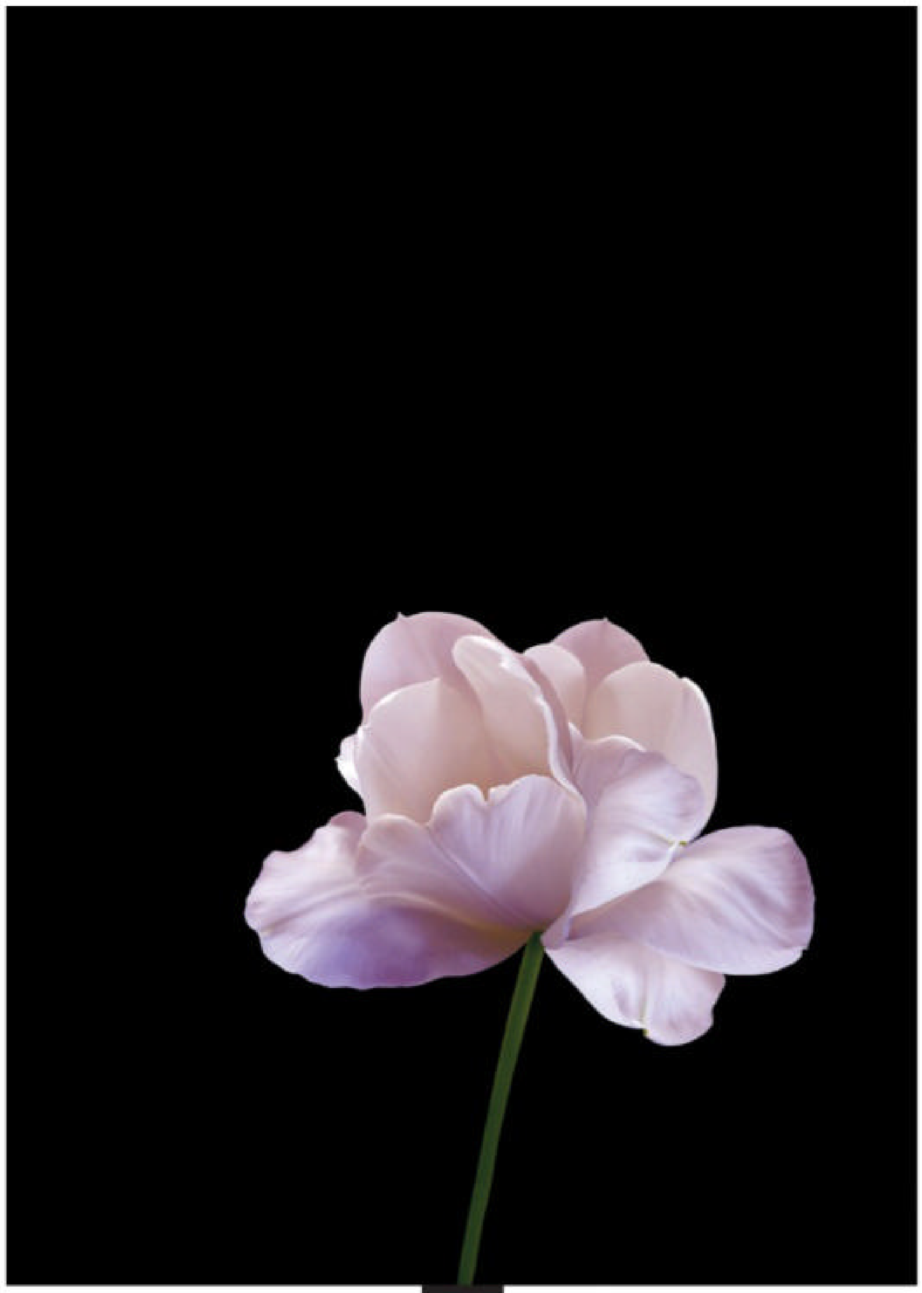
Leading American philosopher Martha Nussbaum talks about this being one of the main limitations of stoicism in her book *Upheavals of Thought*. 'We aren't very loving creatures, apparently, when we philosophise,' she writes. This means that if we focus too hard on our ability to reason – to the point where we stem the flow of natural emotion – it can get in the way of important attachments. 'Emotions are forms of evaluative judgement,' she continues. 'As hope alternates uneasily with fear, as a single event transforms hope into grief, as grief expresses itself as anger… all of these can be the vehicles of an underlying love. They see their object as invested with value or importance, or evidence of irrevocable loss.' Our sense of identity is built on knowing where we stand with people, whom we cherish, whom we would die for, how much we love and care, and without access to that framework, wouldn't we be a little bit lost?

> 'IT TEACHES YOU TO BE RESILIENT, TO FIND BEAUTY AND PLEASURE IN SMALL MOMENTS, AND TO MAXIMISE THE TIME YOU HAVE WITH THE PEOPLE YOU CHERISH'

The other thing that Nussbaum emphasises is emotion's ability to 'move [us] to action'. This is where stoicism really falls down: in the contemporary context of social justice. 'Throughout history, we have seen the power of rage. Anger has galvanised groups to bring about collective change, to start revolutions and to overcome oppression,' says author and activist Soma Sara. If too many of us focused solely on what we felt was in our immediate, personal control and ignored what anyone else thought of us, petitions wouldn't get signed and protests would never happen.

Relying on reason has helped me through the chaos of losing people. Shutting out the noise has walked me through fire and flood to the joy at the other side. But there is no way of being in control at all times without also being detached from people. Sometimes, you have to be a little bit helpless to take the risk of putting your own emotional wellbeing in the hands of something or someone else. Let the rational mind of stoicism help you grieve when something is gone, but don't let it stop you from attaching yourself to it in the first place. These attachments form the richness of life. If giving birth to my son has taught me anything, it's that you can't hole up your feelings in a fortress when a little piece of your heart now lives outside of you – so I'm learning how to bring (some of) the walls back down. □

He doesn't remember what you wore
Or where you went
He doesn't remember the day
(Or sometimes even the month)
But he remembers the perfume on his pillow
That lingered long after your early-morning
exit
When you thought you'd never see him again
But you did
And you do



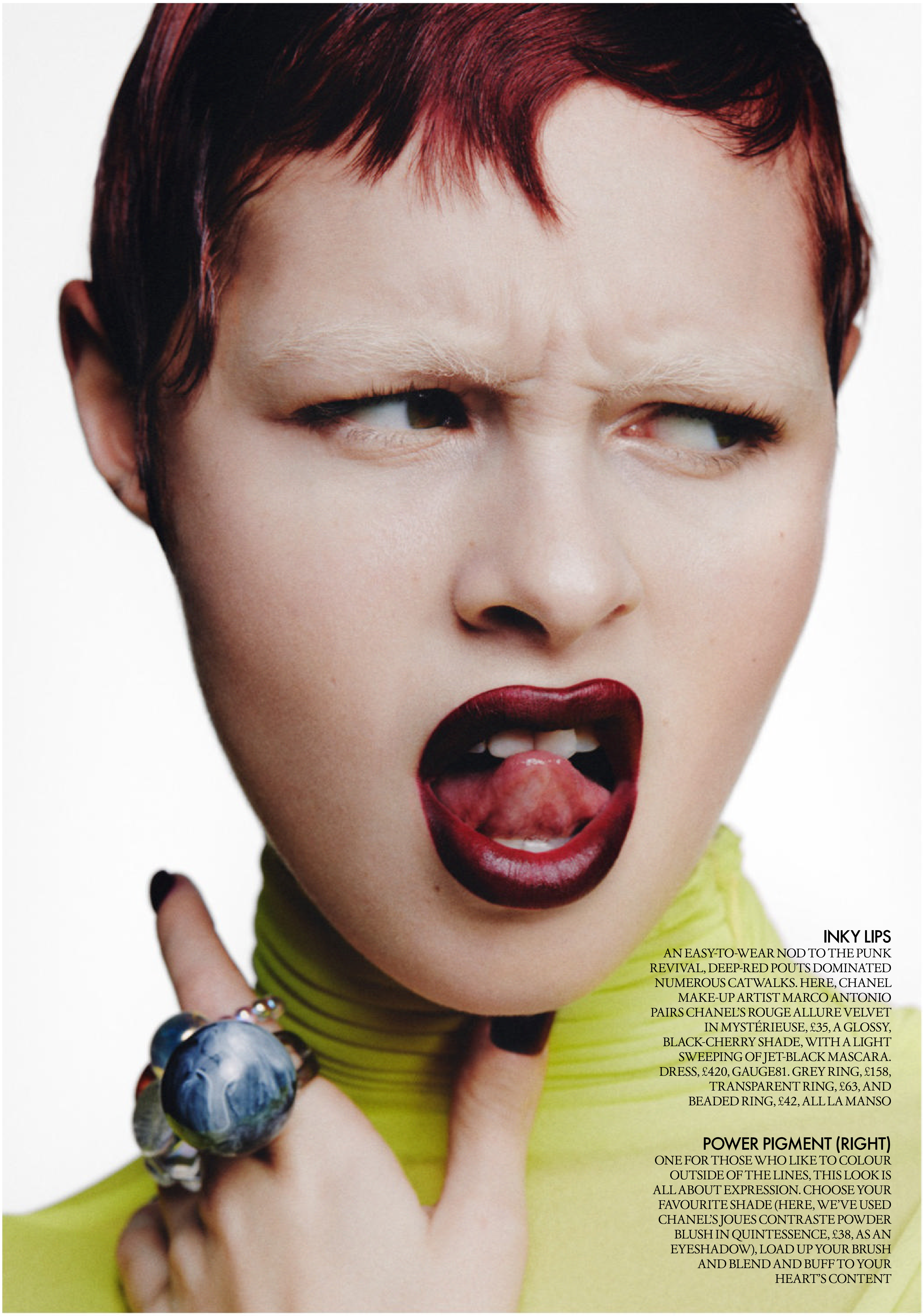
THE FRAGRANCE FOUNDATION UK

Share your story at scentmemories.org
Fragrance lasts

ONCE MORE WITH FEELING

FROM A RETURN TO MOOD-LIFTING, FULL-COLOUR MAKE-UP ON THE RUNWAYS TO THE ELLE EDITORS' PERSONAL PERFUME LOVE STORIES, THIS SEASON'S BEAUTY FOCUSES ON EMOTION

Stylo Yeux Waterproof Longwear Eyeliner and Kohl Pencil in Vert Emeraude (left) and in Cassis (right), £24 each, both CHANEL



INKY LIPS

AN EASY-TO-WEAR NOD TO THE PUNK REVIVAL, DEEP-RED POUTS DOMINATED NUMEROUS CATWALKS. HERE, CHANEL MAKE-UP ARTIST MARCO ANTONIO PAIRS CHANEL'S ROUGE ALLURE VELVET IN MYSTÉRIEUSE, £35, A GLOSSY, BLACK-CHERRY SHADE, WITH A LIGHT SWEEPING OF JET-BLACK MASCARA. DRESS, £420, GAUGE81. GREY RING, £158, TRANSPARENT RING, £63, AND BEADED RING, £42, ALL LA MANSO

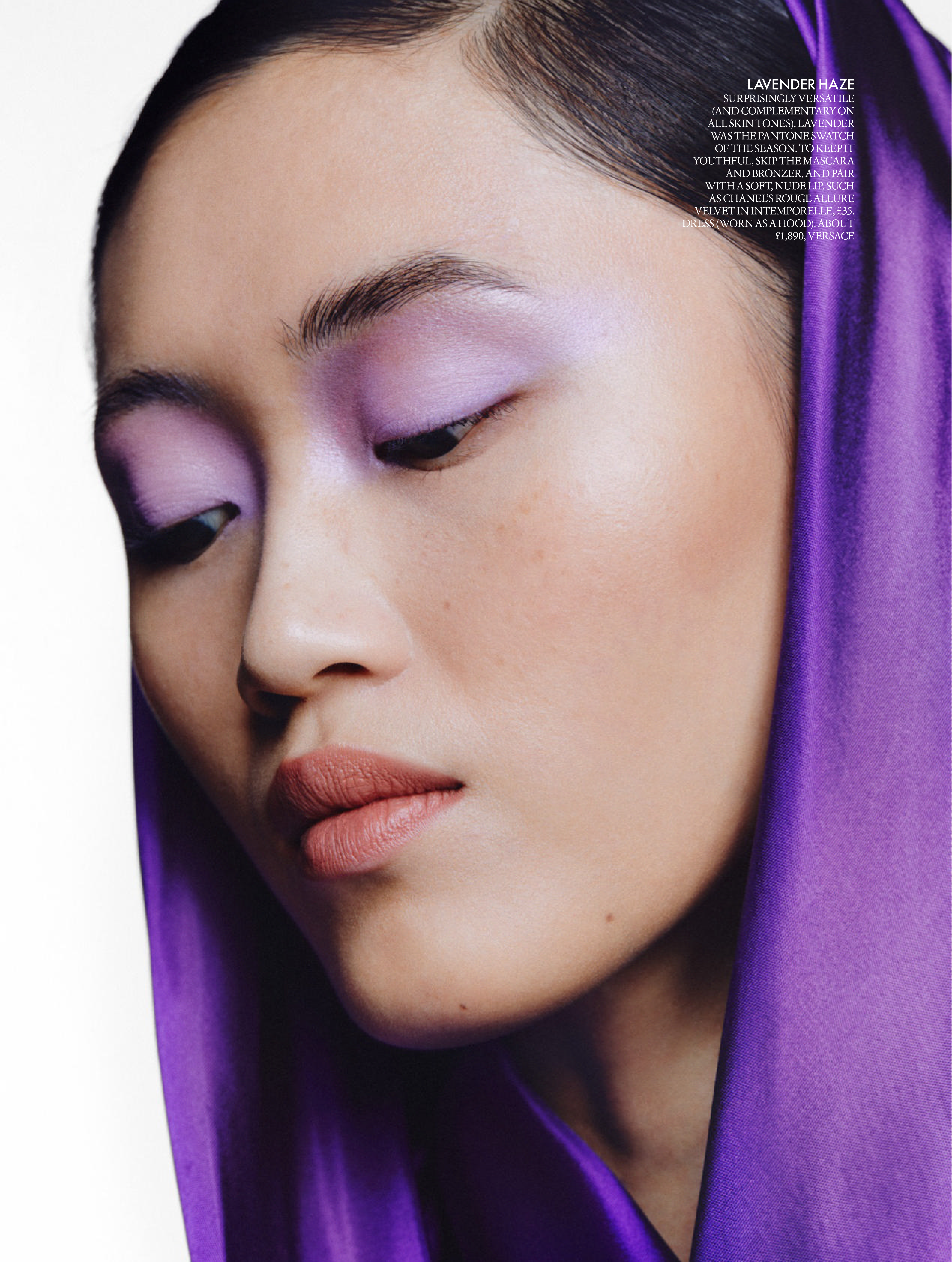
POWER PIGMENT (RIGHT)

ONE FOR THOSE WHO LIKE TO COLOUR OUTSIDE OF THE LINES, THIS LOOK IS ALL ABOUT EXPRESSION. CHOOSE YOUR FAVOURITE SHADE (HERE, WE'VE USED CHANEL'S JOUES CONTRASTE POWDER BLUSH IN QUINTESSENCE, £38, AS AN EYESHADOW), LOAD UP YOUR BRUSH AND BLEND AND BUFF TO YOUR HEART'S CONTENT

COLOUR ME BAD

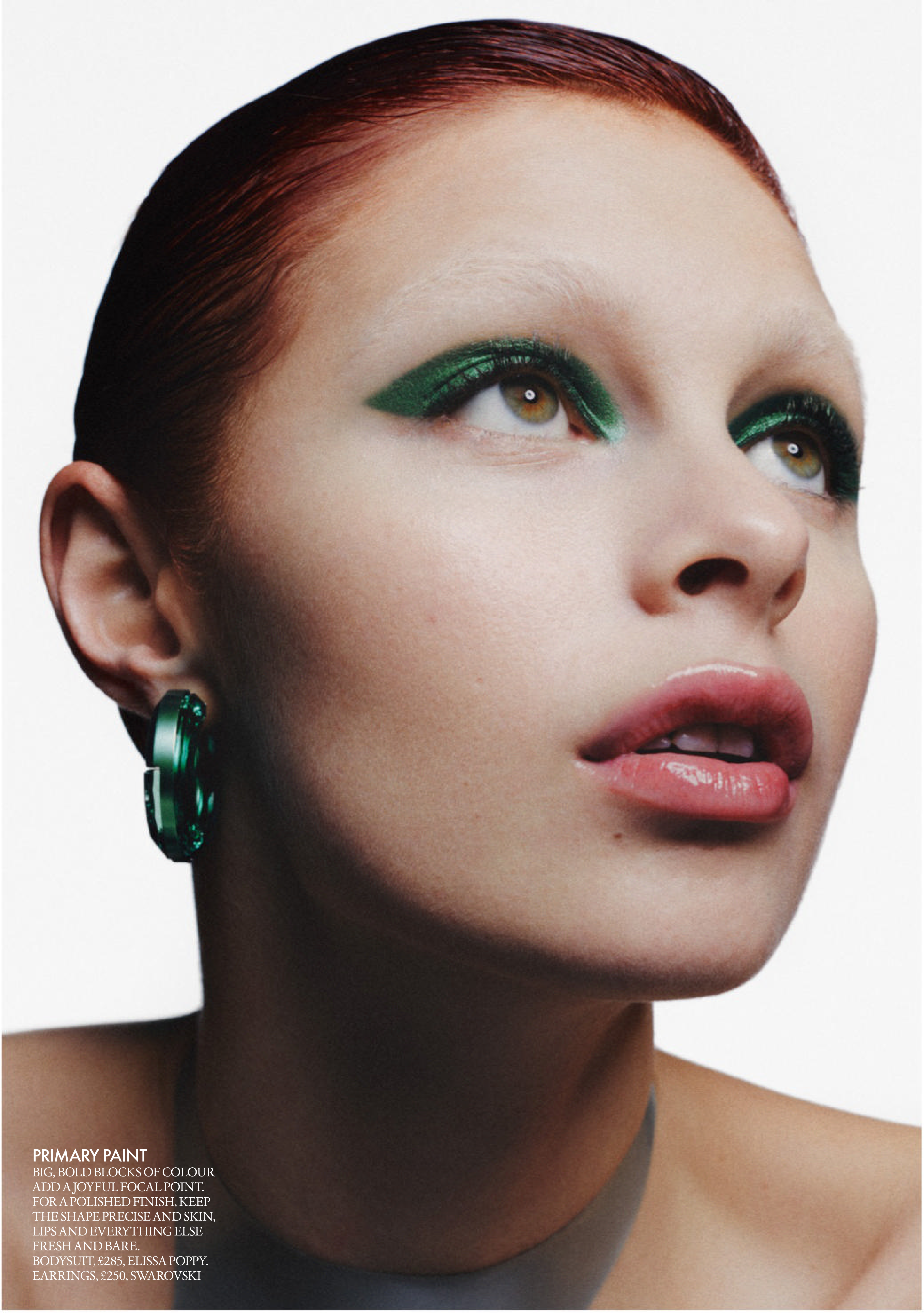
FROM DELICATE AND DREAMY TO BOLD AND BRIGHT, PIGMENT RULED THE RUNWAY THIS SEASON. HERE ARE OUR FAVOURITE LOOKS AND HOW TO MAKE THEM WORK FOR YOU

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LULU McARDLE
MAKE-UP BY MARCO ANTONIO using CHANEL
STYLING BY GEORGIA MEDLEY
WORDS BY JENNIFER GEORGE



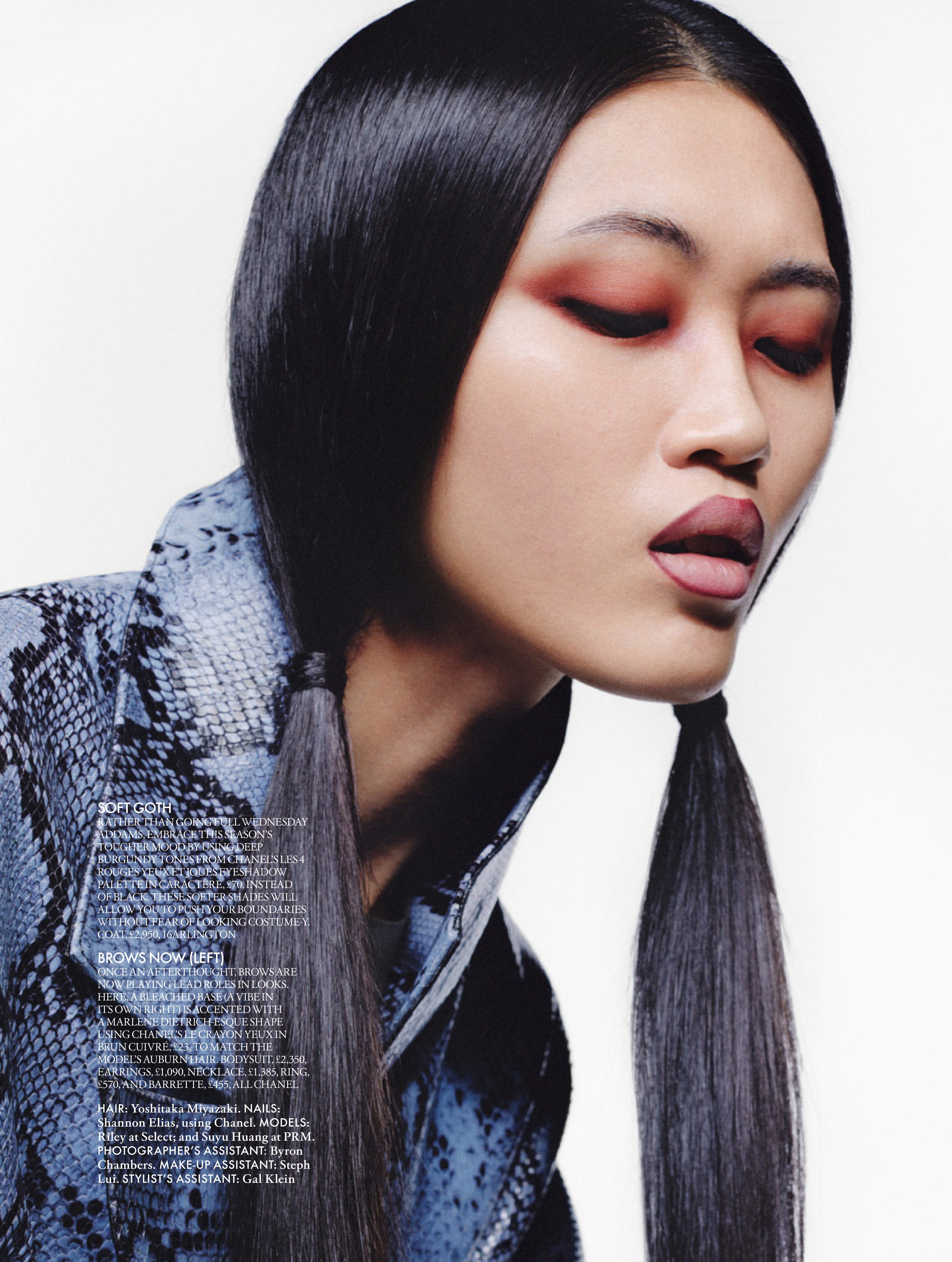
LAVENDER HAZE

SURPRISINGLY VERSATILE (AND COMPLEMENTARY ON ALL SKIN TONES), LAVENDER WAS THE PANTONE SWATCH OF THE SEASON. TO KEEP IT YOUTHFUL, SKIP THE MASCARA AND BRONZER, AND PAIR WITH A SOFT, NUDE LIP, SUCH AS CHANEL’S ROUGE ALLURE VELVET IN INTEMPORELLE, £35. DRESS (WORN AS A HOOD), ABOUT £1,890, VERSACE



PRIMARY PAINT
BIG, BOLD BLOCKS OF COLOUR ADD A JOYFUL FOCAL POINT. FOR A POLISHED FINISH, KEEP THE SHAPE PRECISE AND SKIN, LIPS AND EVERYTHING ELSE FRESH AND BARE.
BODYSUIT, £285, ELISSA POPPY. EARRINGS, £250, SWAROVSKI

CHAN



SOFT GOTH

RATHER THAN GOING FULL WEDNESDAY ADDAMS, EMBRACE THIS SEASON'S TOUGHER MOOD BY USING DEEP BURGUNDY TONES FROM CHANEL'S LES 4 ROUGES YEUX ET JOUES EYESHADOW PALETTE IN CARACTÈRE, £70, INSTEAD OF BLACK. THESE SOFTER SHADES WILL ALLOW YOU TO PUSH YOUR BOUNDARIES WITHOUT FEAR OF LOOKING COSTUME-Y. COAT, £2,950, 16ARLINGTON

BROWS NOW (LEFT)

ONCE AN AFTERTHOUGHT, BROWS ARE NOW PLAYING LEAD ROLES IN LOOKS. HERE, A BLEACHED BASE (A VIBE IN ITS OWN RIGHT) IS ACCENTED WITH A MARLENE DIETRICH-ESQUE SHAPE USING CHANEL'S LE CRAYON YEUX IN BRUN CUIVRÉ, £23, TO MATCH THE MODEL'S AUBURN HAIR. BODYSUIT, £2,350, EARRINGS, £1,090, NECKLACE, £1,385, RING, £570, AND BARRETTE, £455, ALL CHANEL

HAIR: Yoshitaka Miyazaki. **NAILS:** Shannon Elias, using Chanel. **MODELS:** Riley at Select; and Suyu Huang at PRM. **PHOTOGRAPHER'S ASSISTANT:** Byron Chambers. **MAKE-UP ASSISTANT:** Steph Lui. **STYLIST'S ASSISTANT:** Gal Klein

radar

WORDS BY MEDINA AZALDIN

Skin school

Perk up tired eyes with formulas that smooth and brighten skin. Origins Plantscription Wrinkle Correction Eye Cream, £45, gently retexturises with encapsulated retinol. U Beauty The Return Eye Concentrate, £138, contains ceramides and is kind on sensitive skin, and vitamin C in Paula's Choice C5 Super Boost Eye Cream, £40, cheats a rested look.

Pore pros

Healthy pores are the foundation of great skin. Benefit's new six-piece skincare range aims to gently refine and clarify for a smoother, clearer complexion. *The Porefessional range, from £26.*

Purple reign

From subdued heathers to Cadbury brights, shades of purple dominated spring/summer catwalks. At Paul & Joe, make-up artist Georgina Graham evoked 'Valley of the Dolls'-era Sharon Tate with washes of lavender on eyes. Or, go bold with midnight-violet lips à la Versace.

Lisa Eldridge Eyeshadow Palette in Myth, £49. Dior Addict Lip Maximizer in Berry, £32

SCREEN QUEEN

Bedtime scroller? Sarah Chapman's Digital Rest cream protects skin from blue light and repairs damage when you do snooze.

ROCK-STAR TIPS

Embellished nails take on a grungier vibe with metallic studs, as seen at 16Arlington.

LET'S TALK ABOUT SEX

Take pleasure in Quinn, a female-founded audio-erotica app with X-rated stories and playlists. You'll find *Gossip Girl*'s Thomas Doherty's dulcet tones here, too.

SARAH CHAPMAN
LONDON
Digital Rest

Beauty barometer

Our guide to the on-the-up products to try and off-the-wall trends to avoid

NOT ANOTHER PONYTAIL

Get creative with your up-dos instead: try rope braids and textural hair ties.

NO MORE SADCORE

We're all for a good cry, but it's time to swap the faux-teary eyes and find joy in brilliant colours.

SEEING RED

TikTok's DIY take on skin-rejuvenating PRP facials involves the use of, err… menstrual blood. Not a ritual that dermatologists recommend.

PHOTOGRAPHS: IMAXTREE, GETTY IMAGES

Notes on notes

Cherry notes, with their hint of tartness and bitter almond, add nuance and depth to gourmand scents. Joining Tom Ford's cult-hit Lost Cherry are the moody, leather-tinged Cherry Smoke and Electric Cherry, a fizzy cocktail of ginger and morello cherries, £280 each. Kayali Lovefest Burning Cherry 48 EDP, £67, is a moreish blend of patchouli and amber; while Jimmy Choo's uber-glam, vanilla-laced I Want Choo Forever EDP, £68, will leave you feeling like an icon.

KAYALI
LOVEFEST
BURNING CHERRY | 48
TOM FORD
CHERRY SMOKE
EAU DE PARFUM
50 ML

Hair necessities

WELLA PROFESSIONALS
COLOR FRESH
MASK
pink
FFØR
Super:Shine

Pink hair is back, and this time it's bigger and bolder than ever. At Halpern, hairstylist Sam McKnight created higher-than-high Barbie blowouts, while model Skye Rose sported an earlobe-grazing, neon-fuchsia bob at Prabal Gurung. 'There's something very playful yet chic about pink,' McKnight tells ELLE. 'It's become a neutral. There's a shade for everyone and it's very flattering.' Keep your colour vibrant with Wella Professionals Color-Fresh Semi-Permanent Colour Mask in Pink, £15.75, and FFOR Super:Shine Gloss Mist, £19.

THE EDITORS ON… FRAGRANCE

FROM A HEADY SPRITZ TO A CRISP ANDROGYNOUS SPLASH, OUR EXPERTS DECODE THE WORLD OF SCENT

PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL ZAK

MEDINA AZALDIN: POWDERY

NEXT TO GETTING THROUGH THE WHOLE OF AGATHA CHRISTIE'S BACK catalogue and seeing the aurora borealis, being a Well-Scented Woman™ is one of my life's goals. And when I was younger, I thought one needed a signature scent in order to achieve such status; it seemed so chic to leave behind a sillage everyone associates with you.

But committing to one perfume is difficult, given the breadth of choices available. So, rather than exclusively spritzing one scent, I find myself going through fragrance phases instead. My adolescent years were spent smelling like spun sugar and baked goods, while lockdown was marked by an armload of white florals.

Lately I've gravitated towards the very thing I once found 'old-fashioned' and 'lipstick-y': purple flowers. Master perfumers such as Delphine Jelk and Alberto Morillas have managed to bring a cool-girl sensibility to creations involving irises and violets while retaining their powdery elegance. Guerlain Musc Outreblanc is a step above a skin-scent: gossamer light, with a fluffy, clean-laundry vibe, while Morillas' Poudre d'Or is iris at the opera, all plush and velvety thanks to a dose of vanilla.

Comforting and grown-up but far from dusty – it's a phase that I am delighted to be going through this spring and beyond...

MASTER PERFUMERS HAVE BROUGHT A COOL-GIRL FEEL TO PURPLE FLOWERS

1
2
Chloé
4
3
DAISY LOVE MARC JACOBS
GUERLAIN

1 Poudre D'Or, £185, MIZENSIR **2** Atelier Des Fleurs Naturelle Iris, £121, CHLOĒ **3** Daisy Love Paradise, £68, MARC JACOBS **4** Musc Outreblanc, £280, GUERLAIN

KATY YOUNG: MEN'S FRAGRANCES

LIKE ALL GOOD ART FORMS, PERFUME IS CREATED TO MAKE US FEEL SOMETHING. But great perfumery has an additional superpower. As our sense of smell is closely linked to the part of the brain responsible for memory, when we recognise a scent we can't help but be transported to a moment, emotion or person.

It is the reason I am instantly in my father's warm embrace every time I smell Issey Miyake Pour Homme, and why Jean Paul Gaultier For Men leaves me feeling giddy thanks to a teenage crush. It is also why I adore wearing men's fragrances.

I went to an all-girl's school and am immersed in the world of women's media. To say my life errs on the feminine side is not an overstatement. For all that, I am profoundly at peace with my masculine side, and my preferences in fashion and beauty go beyond the gender binary. It's why I avoid dresses, scour charity shops for men's shirts and am drawn to male fragrances. I can't do 'pretty'. Tailored notes of vetiver, dirty rose and sharp bergamot tell my story the way I prefer. Simple citrus splashes these are not, but rather fascinating twists on florals, often layered with spice.

I'm not really that complicated. But I do love the air of mystery a girl working in beauty wearing a masculine perfume leaves behind her. ▷

VETIVER, DIRTY ROSE AND SHARP BERGAMOT NOTES TELL MY STORY THE WAY I PREFER

1
2
CREED
MUSC RAVAGEUR
3
4
edeniste
EAU SAUVAGE

1 Bois du Portugal, £245, CREED **2** Musc Ravageur, £210, FRĒDĒRIC MALLE **3** Rose Fatale, £96, EDENISTE **4** Eau Sauvage, £65, DIOR

KATIE WITHINGTON: SWEET

1 Her Elixir, £86, BURBERRY **2** Apricot Privée, £96, PHLUR **3** Idôle Nectar, £80, LANCÔME **4** Love, Don't Be Shy, £195, KILIAN

AS SOMEONE WHOSE PERFUME LOYALTY IS FLEETING, TESTING and trialling in the fragrance aisle has taught me the notes that fit me snugly. My happy place is amid a mix of vanilla, caramel and freshly diced fruits. It began with childhood spritzes of my mum's J-Lo Miami Glow, followed by playful Noughties body sprays. There's a pressure to shed these coming-of-age notes in my twenties, to seek olfactory uniqueness. But I find the comforting appeal of mouth-watering scents hard to resist.

Sweet doesn't have to mean lip smackers and birthday cakes. Modern perfumes have done some myth-busting in that department. Kilian Love, Don't Be Shy was famously Rihanna's signature scent before Fenty, harmonising a blend of plush petals, marshmallow and juicy honeysuckle. Lancôme's Idôle Nectar makes a convincing case for popcorn perfume with its elegant rose undercurrent. It turns out the key to keeping candied scents grown-up is a bouquet of crisp, feminine florals. A duet that fits me like a glove.

> THE RIGHT SCENT CAN BE MAGICAL, TAKING ONE THROUGH TIME AND SPACE

JENNIFER GEORGE: WARM & SMOKY

ALTHOUGH I AM NOT DECISIVE OR CHIC ENOUGH TO BE LOYAL TO ONE SCENT forever, I do – it turns out – have a signature note. I didn't realise I was an amber girl until recently. During a house move I did a big perfume cull, narrowing down, from a large box of scents, a final 10. All were warm and spicy – and all have a big hit of amber.

Cocooning, slightly sweet but with a woody edge, amber adds an exotic depth and musky touch. As a teenager, my taste was a little more sugar-coated, but today, like Katy, I prefer my perfume on the unisex side, and seek fragrances spiked with amber, mixed with smoky and spicy notes such as tonka and black tea. Even at my most romantic – in a white ball gown on my wedding day – I shunned florals for Jo Malone's rich and slightly sexy Myrrh & Tonka. It remains a favourite: a strong contender if I were ever forced to pare my 10 down to that single, forever, one.

1 Myrrh & Tonka Cologne Intense, £150, JO MALONE LONDON **2** MMW, £200, GIVENCHY **3** Thé Noir 29, £157, LE LABO **4** Les Exclusifs Coromandel, £169, CHANEL

1 Patchouli Of The Underworld, £245, ELECTIMUSS **2** Pluviophile candle, £55, HAECKELS **3** Encelade, £170, MARC-ANTOINE BARROIS **4** Voyeur Verde, £95, MAYA NJIE

EMMA DABIRI: EVOCATIVE

WANT TO TIME TRAVEL? VISIT MYTHICAL realms? The right scent can be magical, with the ability to transport through time and space or into the lands of fantasy.

First up is Encelade by French perfumer Marc-Antoine Barrois. Strangers approach me about this scent. Inspired by the discovery in 1789 of Enceladus, a satellite of Saturn covered in snow, ice and fresh water, but that could one day be covered in jungle thanks to its heated core, Barrois says Encelade is a 'green volcano' with woody and fresh notes (rhubarb, tonka bean, cedar, santal and vetiver) expressing pure nature.

Electimuss is a London-based brand creating powerful, unisex scents inspired by Ancient Rome. Patchouli of the Underworld, an opulent, musky fragrance, is inspired by the darkness of Pluto's kingdom and the resources held deep within the Earth's core. The result is complex and comforting.

Some of my favourite perfumes are by Maya Njie, who draws on her mixed Scandinavian and Gambian background and childhood memories when creating her fragrances. Her power to evoke place, atmosphere and mood through scent is extraordinary. Combining notes of leather, cedarwood and frankincense, Voyeur Verde is a harmonious interplay of bergamot trees, worn leather and verdant foliage in the warm summer sun. □

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2022-11-30-ADPRGRANGEP_E_4

IS BRAIN TRAINING THE NEW ANTI-AGEING?

FROM APPS TO SUPPLEMENTS, 'BRAIN CARE' HAS MUSCLED IN ON THE WELLNESS MARKET TO BECOME A GLOBAL, MULTI-BILLION-DOLLAR INDUSTRY. IS IT JUST A TREND – OR A VITAL INVESTMENT IN OUR FUTURE?

WORDS BY NICOLE MOWBRAY

IT'S NOT YOUR SKIN, IT'S NOT YOUR fitness – it's not even your soul. The newest frontier of wellbeing is your brain. Experts say that, if we want to remain as healthy as possible, we should be prioritising working out our minds as much as we focus on our body's condition.

The pandemic, with its enforced, extended periods of social isolation, unremarkable days with no structure and a sense of timeless drift left many struggling with their memory and mental acuity. Catching the Covid-19 virus only made things worse for many people – including me. After my second bout of coronavirus in the spring of 2022, I suffered with 'brain fog' for weeks, which saw me repeatedly leaving the house without my keys, forgetting what day it was, missing work deadlines…

I'm not alone. A 2022 study by

PHOTOGRAPHS: EVA WANG

University of Cambridge researchers found that 70% of long-Covid sufferers were left with impaired memory and concentration several months after infection.

Having an advance preview of life with limited memory has created a surge of interest in protecting our brains earlier in life. Formerly focused on the very young or the very old, the study of brain health and development has become a preoccupation that now, in these post-lockdown times, spans Generation X to Generation Z. 'There's an increasing awareness in today's younger generations that better mental health starts with better brain health. Our brains develop until we're 25 and then they start shrinking. And one way of keeping them thriving is to follow the science around self care, and in this case, brain care', says Dan Murray-Serter, co-founder of the 'smart supplements' company Heights.

As well as making us feel mentally sharper in the here and now, caring for our brain also helps ward off serious illness in the future. Research by the Lancet Commission on Dementia in 2020 found that 40% of dementia cases in later life could be 'prevented or delayed' by preventative actions undertaken in our twenties, thirties, forties and fifties.

Brain boosting is a booming industry. From the Heights supplements ('We make sure your brain has the nutrients it needs to thrive so you can feel your best long-term', they say) to teas with chaga mushrooms (thought to boost memory), and fragrances supposed to trigger the brain's limbic system, responsible for emotion and memory (rosemary is said to be particularly effective), a slew of new products and practices designed to protect and boost your grey matter have burst onto the market.

Apps packed with games designed to exercise memory, processing speed, flexibility and problem-solving are flying up the charts. The Lumosity app is used by over 100 million people worldwide and enables users to compare their brain agility to that of others their age. Elevate is another free brain-training app, which has been downloaded by 50 million users, over 90% of whom have reported improved vocabulary, memory, maths skills and overall mental sharpness when they use it frequently. In February 2022, the global brain assessment and training industry was forecast to be valued at US $2.04bn, up 16.5% from 2021. By the end of 2032, the market is expected to be worth US $9.4bn.

However, the simplest and most effective way to safeguard brain health is to incorporate a series of basic habits into everyday life. 'The most impactful way to take care of your brain, and therefore invest in your own wellbeing and mental health, is to make sure you're feeding it the right fuel – giving it the right nutrients, drinking enough water, resting properly and moving daily,' Murray-Serter says. In one study, researchers found participants with a high genetic risk of Alzheimer's had a 32% lower risk of all-cause dementia if they had a 'favourable' lifestyle compared with an 'unfavourable' one.

Getting the blood pumping, whether that's by running, strength training or simply taking a brisk walk or dancing around the house, has been shown to lower the risk of dementia by as much as 30% (rising to 45% for Alzheimer's specifically). Exercise also pays dividends for our memories right now. Regular movement improves the memory, attention and processing speeds of healthy younger adults when compared with non-aerobic exercise such as stretching and toning. Working out can also help keep blood pressure and cholesterol in check, which is useful as high levels of both or either have been linked to cognitive decline. And avoid smoking, including exposure to second- and third-hand smoke – it's linked to a 30% to 50% increased risk of dementia in later life.

Even though the average human brain begins to shrink by approximately 5% per decade after the age of 40, which can affect memory and focus, studies have shown that mental decline is not an inevitable consequence of ageing. In fact, making lifestyle changes can even override a genetic predisposition to cognitive illness.

Ways to improve and work out our brains and memory – which we should be doing daily – include everything from number puzzles to practising mind mapping. Dr Richard Restak, author of *The Complete Guide to Memory*, advocates brain teasers like crosswords, Sudoku, Wordle and mental arithmetic, and also encourages playing games such as bridge, chess and 20 questions. He also recommends reading fiction over non-fiction, which utilises the working memory to follow plot and character.

Acquiring new, unfamiliar skills (such as learning to play an instrument or speak a new language) that require the engagement of the working memory, long-term memory and other high-level cognitive processes also helps, as does a healthy and varied diet – oily fish, nuts, seeds, olive oil, a low dairy intake and a little red wine. Managing your sugar consumption is important, too, as high blood sugar has also been linked to an increased risk of dementia.

It's also important to prioritise sleep. When we sleep deeply, the brain is 'washed' by waves of cerebrospinal fluid, removing toxins that can build up and eventually contribute to brain degeneration. And prescribe yourself socialising, too: hanging out with friends and family is clinically proven to be good for your brain health. A study of people over the age of 55 found that those who regularly participated in dinner parties or other social events had a lower risk of losing their memory. Clubs, classes or social groups serve the same function.

And finally… don't panic.

As Dr Restak points out when I confess my ongoing struggles to recall people's birthdays and names at a dinner party, trouble recollecting something doesn't usually mean you have a health concern. 'Lesser forms of amnesia are a normal part of life for the vast majority of people,' he explains. 'When challenged, most of us will remember far less than we think we can.'

There are treatments available to slow the progression of Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia, and much anticipation around a drug called Lecanemab (currently in phase-3 clinical trials), which caused excitement at the end of last year when it was announced that it showed 'potential' to reduce cognitive decline. While a complete cure remains merely a prospect on the horizon, Dr Restak has this to say: 'Ultimately, by honing and maintaining your memory skills, you could protect yourself – to the extent that it's possible – from the ravages of Alzheimer's and other dementias. So, you have everything to gain by increasing your memory skills, and nothing to lose.' ☐

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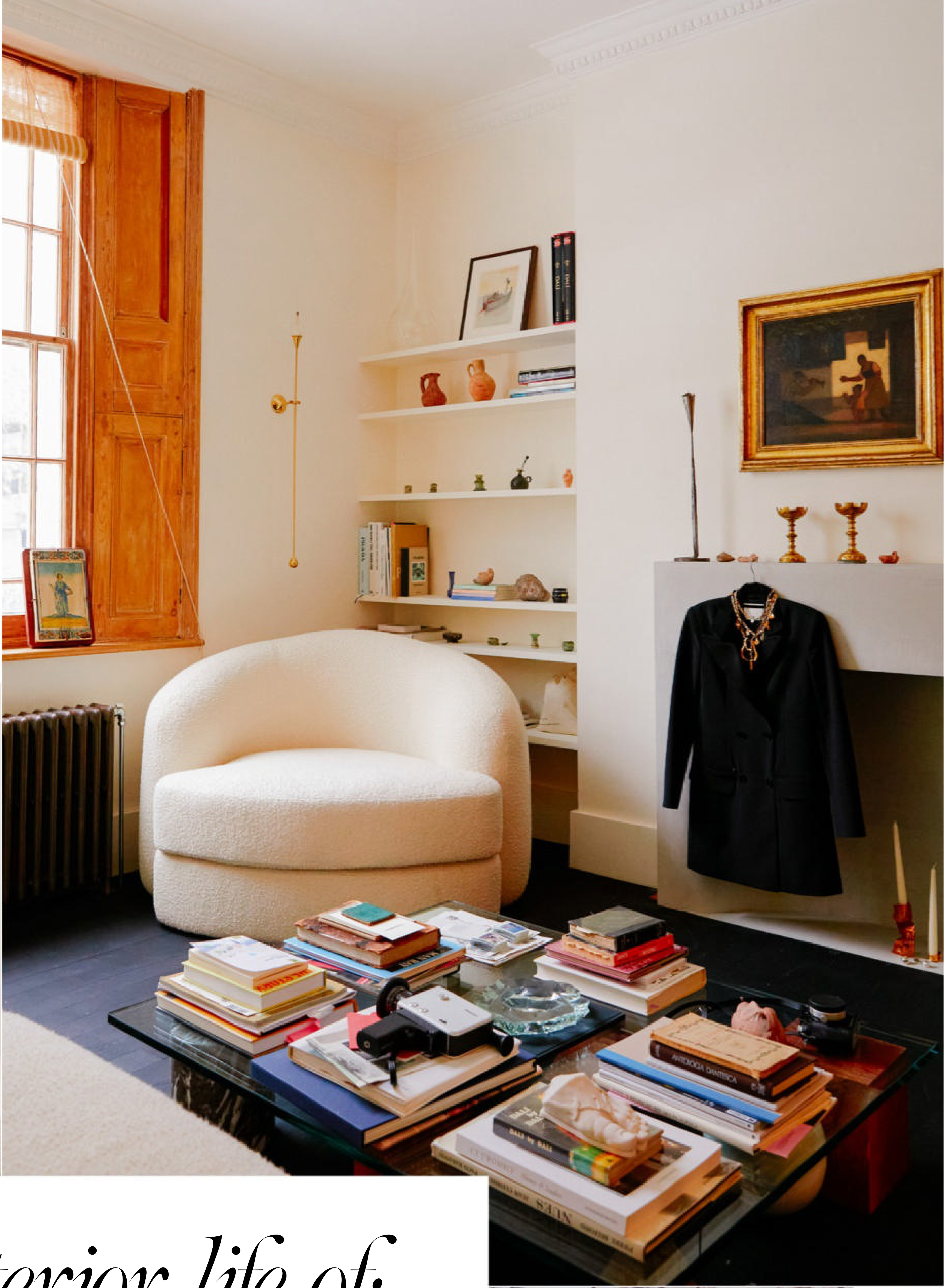
STRANGER THINGS

FLORALS FOR SPRING? NOT THIS YEAR. WE'RE LEANING INTO OUR MINIMALIST SIDE WITH A LOOK AROUND THE DESIGNER ROSH MAHTANI'S COCOON-LIKE LONDON HOME AND AN EDIT OF THE GOTHIC CLASSICS TO ENHANCE YOUR INTERIOR. PLUS, HOW TO GET OFF THE TOURIST TRAIL IN ITALY, AND A GLIMPSE OF WHERE THE ELLE EDITORS REALLY STAY

PHOTOGRAPH: SERENA BROWN. HAIR AND MAKE-UP: MARLĒNE ANDERSSON USING TOM FORD BEAUTY AND BALMAIN HAIR UK. STYLING: GAL KLEIN



CREAM OF THE CROP
ROSH MAHTANI'S LIGHT-FILLED INTERIORS ARE THE PERFECT SHOWCASE FOR HER ARTEFACTS AND VINTAGE PIECES

The interior life of: Rosh Mahtani

The Alighieri founder invites ELLE into her classically inspired home in London

WORDS BY KATIE O'MALLEY
PHOTOGRAPHS BY SERENA BROWN
STYLING BY GAL KLEIN

CLASSIC GLAMOUR
MAHTANI WEARS DRESS, £695, RAEY AT MATCHESFASHION. ALL JEWELLERY, ALIGHIERI, ROSH'S OWN. ABOVE LEFT: MAHTANI'S DINING ROOM

CLERKENWELL – A POCKET OF LONDON known for its literary history, bookshops and as the setting of Dickens novels – was always going to be a good fit for Rosh Mahtani. 'I love losing myself in stories,' she says. 'My dream has been to create my own little microcosm, whether it's my home, studio or brand.'

Born and raised in Zambia, Mahtani relocated to London at the age of nine. Despite the abundance of colour that filled her childhood, it was a move to Florence and a scholarly love affair with the Renaissance poet Dante Alighieri while at university that formed the foundation of her classically influenced aesthetic and inspired her to launch her jewellery brand, Alighieri, in 2014. 'I've always seen Alighieri as an extension of me – a universe bringing people together,' she says. The brand's tagline, 'Modern heirlooms', is fitting for a designer passionate about 'the juxtaposition between rustic things that feel like treasure from a bygone era and propelling them into the modern world'.

Today, Mahtani is wearing her uniform: old Levi's jeans, a Prada jumper ('I gifted it to my dad one Christmas, and stole it back'), an oversized white cashmere scarf and APC ankle boots. 'I love the idea of timeless pieces that act as a blank canvas for our jewellery,' she says.

Contrary to the writer's fear of a blank page, Mahtani loves to start from scratch. It explains her choice to buy a two-storey Victorian flat, close to Exmouth Market, in October 2020. 'When I moved in, it was a hot mess,' she laughs, recalling stripping the flat of its lino floors and blue-tiled walls when she began renovations. 'It was a real gut job.' The makeover took a year and a half to complete, during which time she had to move her studio's stock to her living room. 'The flat was essentially a dispatch centre for Alighieri,' she remembers. 'There were weeks without running water.'

Fortunately, the hard work paid off. Mahtani's home is an ideal mix of new and old. Donald Judd-esque lines and microcrete cement finishes seamlessly contrast with Etruscan accents and Italian-feel architecture. 'One of the biggest things was to open up the space,' Mahtani says of her open-plan, Fred Rigby-designed kitchen on the ground floor that is the centrepiece of the home.

To its left, through large wooden doors that are kept open to create a 'sprawling space', sits the living room. Crevices decorate the staircase towards the lower-ground floor ('They make you feel as if you're going into an underworld'), while an archway and terracotta tiles outside the bathroom subtly reflect her love of the Mediterranean.

Mahtani's goal for her home was to create a sense of timelessness. 'I wanted it to feel like something I'd love forever,' she says, adding she doesn't subscribe to trends. While several of the Farrow & Ball Wimborne White-painted walls are decorated with artefact-filled shelves, others have intentional negative space. 'People always ask if I intend to keep them blank, but I don't want to cover every wall. It's important to accumulate items over time.' Mahtani's most treasured finds include a red leather-bound ▷

copy of Dante's *Inferno*, purchased after receiving Alighieri's first MatchesFashion order ('I love the idea of buying a book to mark a moment'), and a rare edition of *The Divine Comedy* her mother found in a market for £10. 'It's got an inscription inside dating back to 1933,' she says.

Despite its gallery-inspired aesthetic, Mahtani's home feels anything but cold. 'I bring in warmth with textures,' she explains, referring to the Tibor bouclé-covered 'puffer couch', the Giovanni Banchi-designed floor light (her first 'grown up' home purchase) and a marble-based antique coffee table in the living room. 'The objects around me are so familiar that it always feels like home.' Byredo candles, incense and a bathtub, separated from her bedroom by an Alvar Aalto pinewood screen, add to the sanctuary-like feel. 'I love having a bath at the end of the day – there's something magical about it.'

With an eye for treasures, Mahtani relishes visiting vintage shops in London such as Alfies Antique Market and Monument Store. 'I found the bathroom sink in the garden of a collector in Hackney,' she says. 'It was dug up from the ground and was covered in mud.' As for art, she trusts the right pieces will find her. 'I never go out searching. I like to stumble upon things,' she says of her collection, which includes a female bust from a Nepalese antique market, photography by Joanna Piotrowska and original Salvador Dalí watercolours.

Mahtani celebrates Alighieri's ninth birthday this year. 'It's always been about bringing people together and nurturing a dialogue through objects. It feels as if we are heading towards a real milestone.' ◻

TOE THE LINE
ABOVE: MAHTANI WEARS KNIT, £425, JOSEPH AT MYTHERESA. BELT, ALIGHIERI, AND JEANS, BOTH MAHTANI'S OWN

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VERSACE SS23

Paint it black

Have gothic tendencies and a thirst for the macabre? Here's how to invite the darkness into your home without turning it into the Addams Family's manor

COMPILED BY GRACE CLARKE

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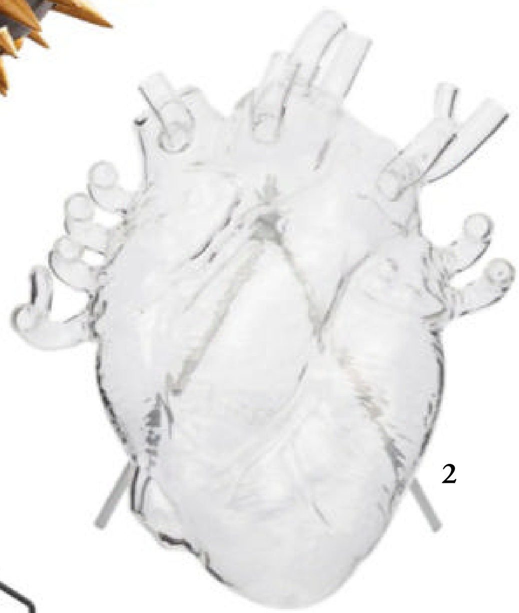
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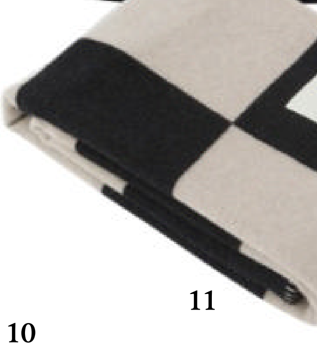
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1 Bowl, £470, L'OBJET at NET-A-PORTER
2 Heart vase, £100, SELETTI **3** Glasses, £340, REFLECTIONS COPENHAGEN
4 Vases, £180, POLSPOTTEN **5** Plate, £95, GINORI 1735 **6** Sofa, £3,598, LIGNE ROSET at HEAL'S **7** Candle, £446, VERSACE
8 Lighter, £400, CELINE **9** Candle, £90, TRUDON **10** Chess set, £5,200, PRADA
11 Cashmere blanket, £495, TEKLA
12 Candleholder, £735, ANISSA KERMICHE
13 Spiked bowl, £270, PUBLISHED BY

PHOTOGRAPH: IMAXTREE

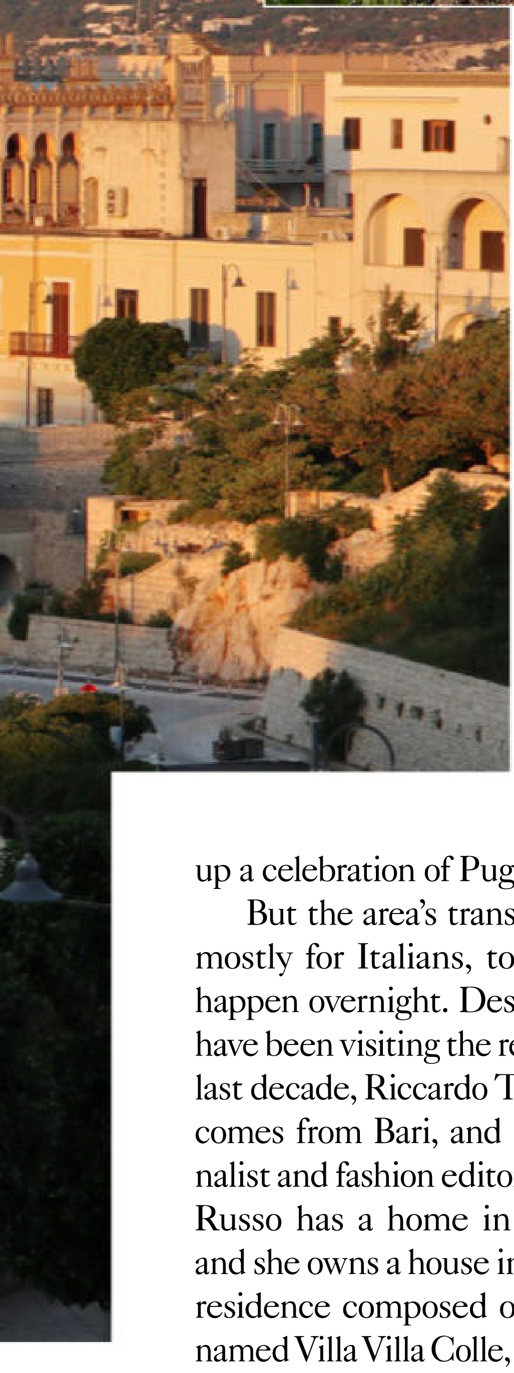
THE SECRET DOLCE VITA

IT'S NOT THE MOST FAMOUS OR THE MOST GLAMOROUS, BUT THIS SLEEPY ITALIAN REGION, SAYS *AMY BREWSTER*, IS WHERE THE STYLE SET HAVE LEFT THEIR HEARTS

IN MAY 2022 A LONG LIST OF A-LISTERS ARRIVED IN ITALY. Dakota Johnson, Jodie Turner-Smith, Sinead Burke and Paul Mescal were just a few of the many actors, models and members of the fashion pack who made the whirlwind trip.

But it wasn't Rome or Milan, or even the glamour of the Amalfi coastline, that was pulling in the well-dressed crowd. It was the traditionally poorer, quieter and less-developed southern region of Puglia that had the A-list making the journey for 24 hours on its shores. Gucci's creative director Alessandro Michele had chosen to show his 'Gucci Cosmogonie' collection at the Castel del Monte, a mysterious 13th-century Italian fortress located on a hill near the Puglian city of Andria. The historic landmark was dimly lit and the show started as the sun sank below the horizon, perfectly lining up with the blood moon.

This wasn't the first time a fashion house had chosen Puglia as its backdrop. In July 2020, designer Maria Grazia Chiuri drew on her Italian heritage – her father hails from the region – and showed Dior's Cruise 2021 collection at Piazza del Duomo, in front of the city of Lecce's cathedral. It was the label's first show post-Covid, live-streamed for the fashion world *sans* real-life audience, aside from a few locals who watched from their balconies overlooking the square. The 90-look collection paid homage to Lecce's styles and traditions, and was created with materials sourced from local artisans – Chiuri had summoned



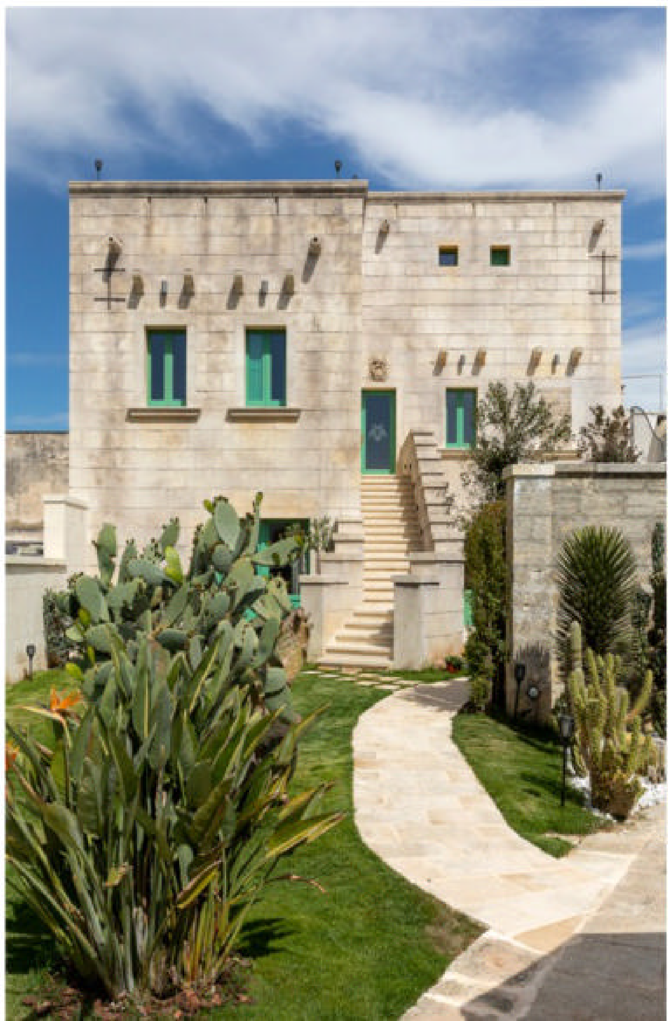
up a celebration of Puglia, its customs and its people.

But the area's transition from a lesser-known holiday spot, mostly for Italians, to bona fide fashion destination didn't happen overnight. Designers Giorgio Armani and Raf Simons have been visiting the region for the last decade, Riccardo Tisci's family comes from Bari, and Italian journalist and fashion editor Anna dello Russo has a home in the region and she owns a house in Tricase – a residence composed of nine *trulli* named Villa Villa Colle, no less. And thanks to Dior and Gucci, fashion editors and stylists have swarmed the area, so it comes as no surprise that the hotels in Puglia are now also making a name for themselves in the style stakes.

Old palaces have been restored and become five-star boutique hotels with original furnishings, tall ceilings and antique art adorning the walls. And, as demonstrated by the recent high-profile fashion events, the local culture, produce and people are at the heart of what these hotels offer.

One perfect example of this Puglian blend of style and tradition is the Hotel Palazzo Ducale Venturi. Its entrance – a green wooden door on a quiet, unassuming residential street – gives away very little of what lies on the other side. A 16th-century palace, the derelict building has been carefully restored in recent years and the original vaulted stone ceilings and other period features kept as focal points of the decor. Fireplaces and two antique salt ovens were also recovered, allowing guests to try their hand at pizza making, one of many activities the hotel offers. This isn't the hotel for those looking to 'chill and swill': guests use Palazzo Ducale Venturi's plush quarters to rest their heads after long days exploring nearby coastal towns and cycling routes. The palace now houses 20 rooms – 14 in the main building and another six the old armoury next to the saltwater pool, each with its own story and brimming with antiques. A secret spot within the palace's walls is its citrus garden, an ideal place for guests to relax in the heat of the sun or to enjoy a drink (or several) as the sun sets in the evening. Located in the sleepy town of Minervino di Lecce, a short drive from the coastal town of Otranto and Lecce itself, the Palazzo is an ideal base for exploring the region, its peaceful atmosphere a balm on those days when you just want to recharge.

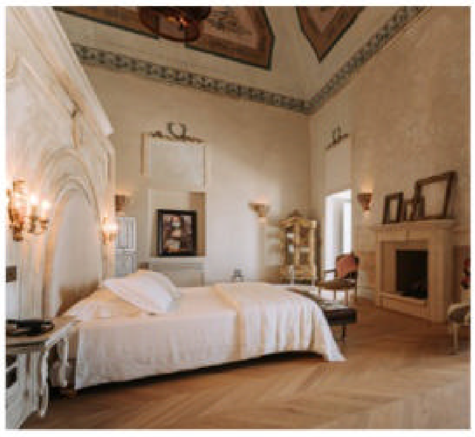
The magic of Puglia is that, unlike areas that are developed to within an inch of their lives, it still feels authentic. The most popular boutiques are the ones selling the area's famous ceramics, not the same knick-knacks you could get anywhere. People don't make pilgrimages to slick cocktail bars, but to venues such as Masseria Croce Piccola in the Itria Valley – a vineyard and farm with a restaurant, set in oak woods (an afternoon there with host Bepi Povia and his dog Bo Bo would be a highlight of any trip). The region spans both Adriatic and Ionian coastlines, so seaside towns and beaches are plentiful. Otranto, Italy's easternmost town, has it all: architecture, white-sand beaches and restaurants with views that gaze towards the Balkans and Greece. The restaurant I Villani D'Aragona is a lunchtime must. Venture south of Otranto towards Orte to ▷



A-LIST APPROVED
CLOCKWISE FROM OPPOSITE: SANTA CESAREA TERME ON THE COAST OF PUGLIA; A VINEYARD AT MASSERIA CROCE PICCOLA; DISHES AT HOTEL PARAGON 700'S RESTAURANT; INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR VIEWS OF PALAZZO DUCALE VENTURI

PHOTOGRAPHS: GETTY IMAGES, AMY BREWSTER

YOURS TRULLI
CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: A FIAT 500 AND *TRULLI* AT ALBEROBELLO; THE POOL, A SUITE AND A VIEW OF THE RESTAURANT AT PARAGON 700; TURQUOISE WATERS AT SPIAGGIA DI TORRE SANT'ANDREA



paddle in the crystal-blue water of the Adriatic, then head even further south to visit the Cava di Bauxite, a quarry lake known for its turquoise water and surrounded by red rock, known by locals as the Small Wonder of Salento.

Thanks to its whitewashed stone huts with conical roofs (*trulli*), Alberobello has quickly become the poster town for Puglia, as happened with Positano and the Amalfi Coast. But there is far more to Alberobello than its beautiful buildings. Many of the *trulli* are still inhabited by locals – the town might be flooded with tourists in peak season, but it never loses its authentic feel. However, if you do want to avoid the summer-holiday surge, head to Aia Piccola, a much less-crowded spot, home to 400 *trulli* and the occasional bar and restaurant.

A 90-minute drive north of Minervino di Lecce is Ostuni, where Paragon 700's rustic red-brick façade stands out against the backdrop of 'the White City'. From the outside, you can tell that the walls house something special. Palazzo Rosso, an 18th-century manor house that has been restored to create a boutique hotel, has had many past lives: as a convent, a home to a science institute, as a police barracks, and as the residence of the city's mayor. Step inside and the interiors are weird and wonderful. Defaced Renaissance paintings line the dimly lit hallways and huge candelabras dominate the entrance. But it's the rooms that you'll remember, each with its own quirks.

Ostuni is one of Puglia's most popular tourist destinations and Paragon 700 is located in the midst of its alleyways, minutes away from the cathedral and central square. Getting to the town is a little tricky (a car is a must), but once you're there you won't need to leave. The narrow streets are full of artisan shops and cafés, and once a month there's an antiques market where you can source local treasures. If you head down to the coast (a 15-minute drive), you'll be greeted by beaches of white sand. Should leaving the luxury of the hotel feel like too much effort, fear not: Paragon 700 has the only swimming pool in town, and it would be rude not to make the most of it.

Only time will tell whether Puglia will go the way of other fashion-pack approved destinations and become too popular for its own good. In the meantime, while the region still retains its magic, the only sensible thing to do is to discover what Alessandro Michele, Maria Grazia Chiuri *et al* find so captivating about it. Go, now. ☐

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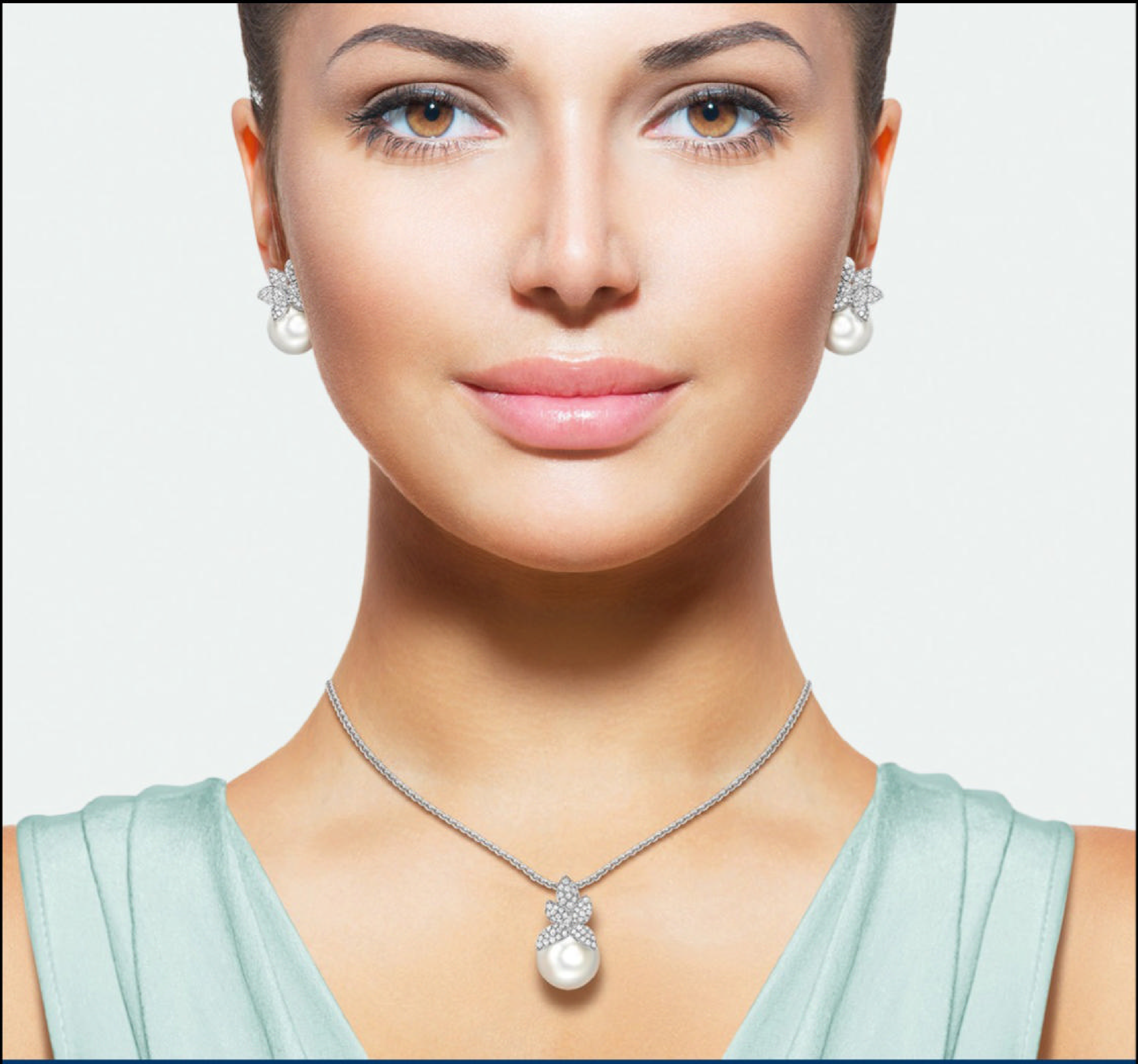

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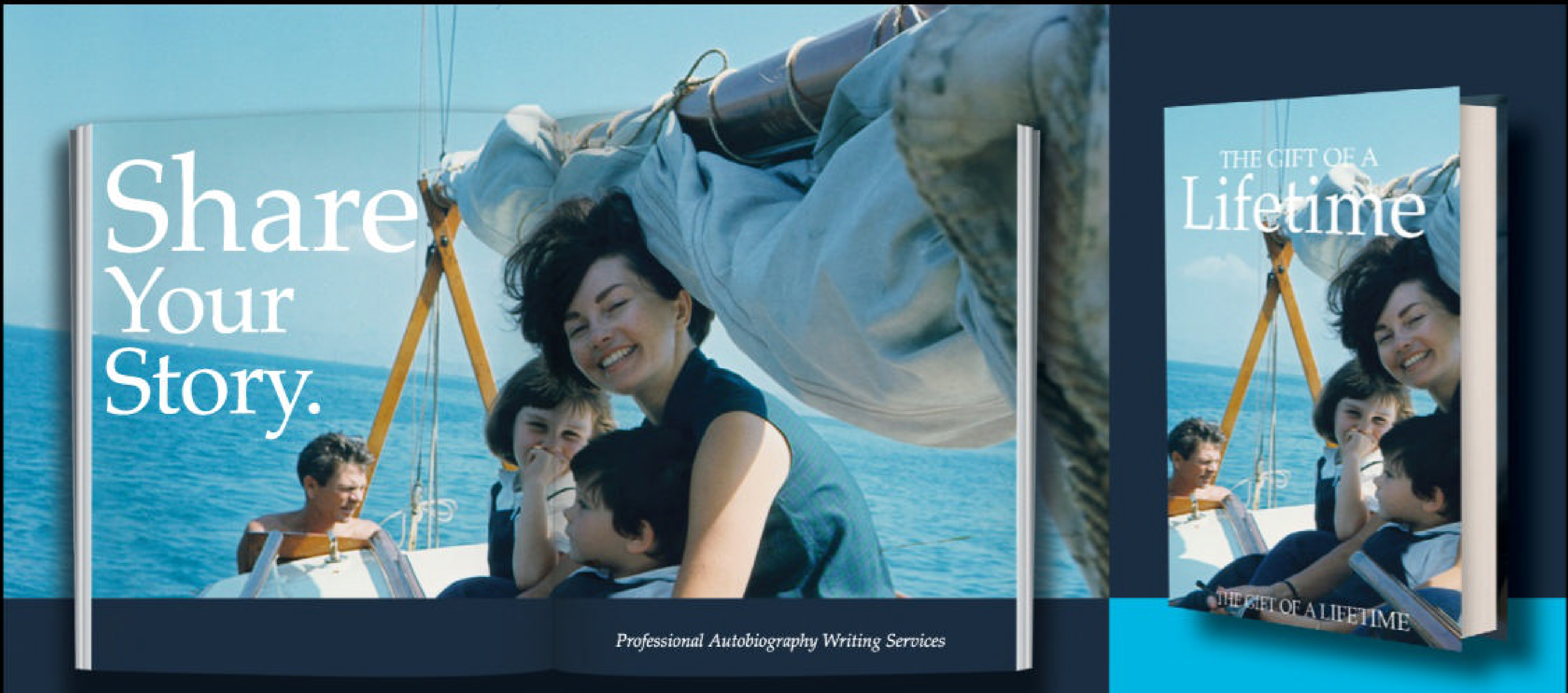
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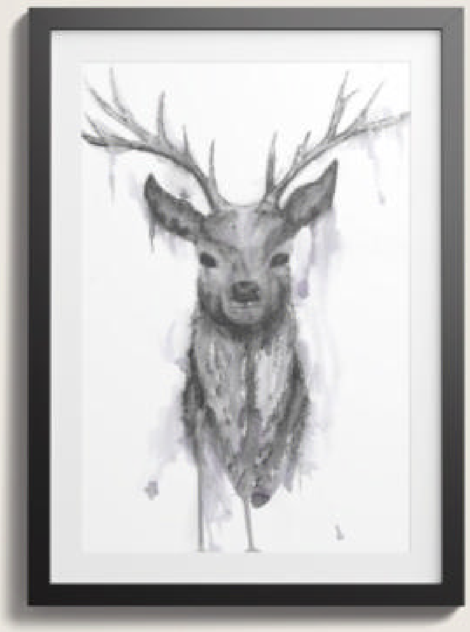

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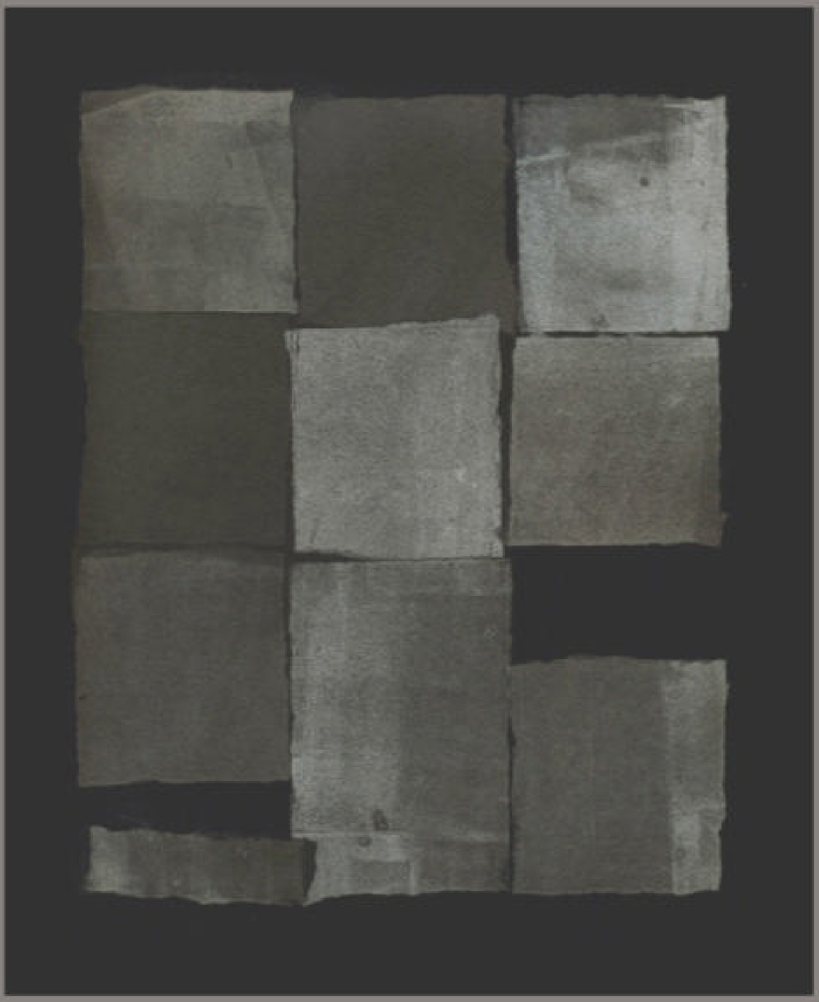

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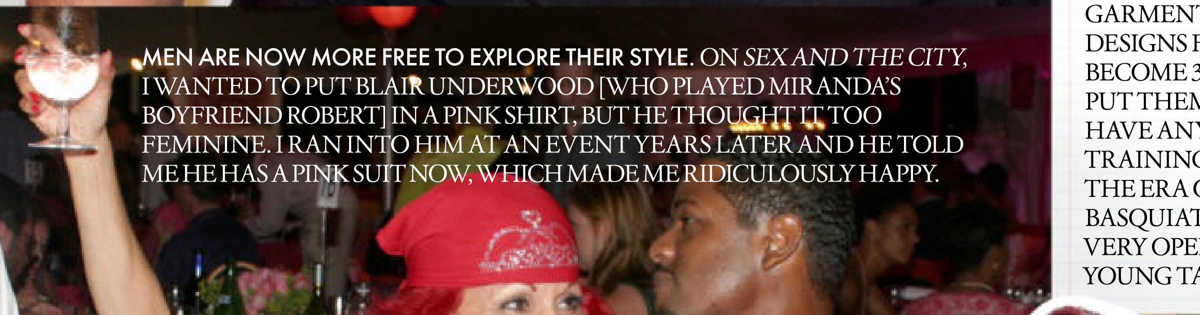
My life in fashion: Patricia Field

The 'Emily in Paris' costume designer on Andy Warhol dropping by her first shop and why she just clicked with Sarah Jessica Parker

INTERVIEW BY EVE WALKER

I GOT MY FIRST JOB AT A DISCOUNT STORE, IN THE BLOUSE DEPARTMENT. IT WAS A LITTLE CHEESY, BUT I BOUGHT SOME BEAUTIFUL MANNEQUINS AND ALL OF A SUDDEN THE BLOUSES CAME ALIVE. A COMMITTEE OF EXECUTIVES CAME INTO MY LITTLE DEPARTMENT BECAUSE SALES HAD SOARED AND THEY DIDN'T KNOW WHY – IT FELT GREAT.



MEN ARE NOW MORE FREE TO EXPLORE THEIR STYLE. ON *SEX AND THE CITY*, I WANTED TO PUT BLAIR UNDERWOOD [WHO PLAYED MIRANDA'S BOYFRIEND ROBERT] IN A PINK SHIRT, BUT HE THOUGHT IT TOO FEMININE. I RAN INTO HIM AT AN EVENT YEARS LATER AND HE TOLD ME HE HAS A PINK SUIT NOW, WHICH MADE ME RIDICULOUSLY HAPPY.

WORKING WITH SARAH JESSICA PARKER WAS A CAREER HIGHLIGHT, BECAUSE SHE *GETS* FASHION. I COULD TELL SHE KNEW EXACTLY WHAT SHE WAS DOING. WE CLICKED, SO THAT RELATIONSHIP HAS CONTINUED OVER THE YEARS.

MY MOM HAD A CASHMERE-SWEATER FETISH, BUT AS A KID THE MOST PERFECT GIFT I RECEIVED WAS A SUEDE COWGIRL OUTFIT FROM MY AUNT. IT WAS SOMETHING JUST FOR ME THAT I TRULY LOVED.

MY MOST LOVED PIECES ARE BY ANDRE WALKER. I'VE ALWAYS BEEN IN AWE OF THE WAY HE CREATES GARMENTS. HE CUTS DESIGNS FLAT AND THEY BECOME 3D WHEN YOU PUT THEM ON. HE DIDN'T HAVE ANY FORMAL TRAINING, BUT IT WAS THE ERA OF JEAN-MICHEL BASQUIAT, WHICH WAS VERY OPEN TO ARTISTRY. YOUNG TALENT THRIVED.

WHEN I OPENED MY OWN SHOP IN NEW YORK, IT NATURALLY EVOLVED AND BECAME KNOWN BY DESIGNERS SUCH AS DOLCE & GABBANA. I'LL NEVER FORGET THE DAY ANDY WARHOL CAME IN AND TOLD ME I WAS FAMOUS.

COSTUME DESIGN GAVE ME ANOTHER SPACE TO EXPRESS MYSELF. THE FIRST FILM I WORKED ON WAS A DRAMA ABOUT A WINDOW DRESSER WHO WAS BEING STALKED. MY FAVOURITE LOOK WAS AN INCREDIBLY SEXY, SILKY GOWN I PUT IN THE SHOPFRONT.

OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS, I'VE RUN THE ART FASHION GALLERY WITH DESIGNERS AND ARTISTS INCLUDING SCOOTER LAFORGE AND DAQUANE CHERRY. IT'S THE ULTIMATE BLEND, AND KEEPS ME IN TOUCH WITH THE WORLD THAT I LOVE.

MY CLOSET IS PACKED, BUT I STILL WEAR IT ALL; I OWN OVER A DOZEN PAIRS OF JEANS ALONE. IT'S SO FUN TO CONSTRUCT YOUR OWN LOOK – YOU ROB YOURSELF OF CREATIVITY IF YOU ONLY FOLLOW TRENDS. INDIVIDUALITY HAS BEEN KEY IN BOTH MY LIFE AND CAREER.

PAT IN THE CITY: MY LIFE OF FASHION, STYLE AND BREAKING ALL THE RULES BY PATRICIA FIELD (£20, 4TH ESTATE) IS OUT ON 14 FEBRUARY. PHOTOGRAPHS: JOSH JORDAN. COURTESY OF PATRICIA FIELD, GETTY IMAGES, REX FEATURES/SHUTTERSTOCK

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